

media times

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The llamas in my back garden

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TOMORROW

Introducing MEGA - our new kid's comic

IN THE SATURDAY TIMES

KYLIE

On fame, failure and the future

Tribute to 'debt we owe to Prince Philip'

Monarchy must listen and adapt says the Queen

By ALAN HAMILTON

THE QUEEN yesterday celebrated her golden wedding anniversary with a thanksgiving service at Westminster Abbey, a ball in Windsor Castle and an assurance that the monarchy was in touch with its Government and its people.

With her husband listening appreciatively, the Queen told Tony Blair and 350 guests at a celebratory "people's banquet" in Whitehall that the Royal Family must heed public opinion if it was to adapt to the future, and she would endeavour to interpret public opinion correctly.

In a day of celebration and of the warmest of tributes from Mr Blair, the Queen's speech was the clearest public acknowledgement she has yet made that, after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, the monarchy must adapt to survive.

The Queen said: "It often falls to the Prime Minister, and the government of the day, to be the bearer of the messages sent from people to Sovereign. Prime Minister, I know that you, like your predecessors, will always pass such messages, as you read them, without fear or favour." But in a day that was far more personal than a state occasion, the Queen's most heartfelt remark was reserved for her husband of 50 years. The Duke of Edinburgh was not someone who took easily to compliments, she said, but he had been her strength and stay all these years. "I, and his whole family, in this and many other countries, owe him a debt greater than he would ever claim or we shall ever know."

The Queen's tribute echoed that of the Duke the day before, when he told a City of London banquet that his wife's greatest asset was her tolerance. For their anniversary celebrations, the couple were joined by almost the entire Royal Family and by more than 50 members of other royal families, both regnant



Guess who came to lunch?

— Page 3

Queen's speech, page 2
Peter Stothard, 20

and deposed, most of whom are related, however distantly, through Queen Victoria. Last night the royal guests travelled to Windsor Castle for a private ball for 600.

For the first time in two days of anniversary celebrations, it was an opportunity to relax among family and friends. Before the ball, the royal couple gave a dinner party in the castle for 60 of their closest family and friends. Other guests were arriving at 10.30pm ready to dance the night away in the newly restored St George's Hall, rebuilt from the ashes of the 1992 fire.

At yesterday morning's Abbey service, Dr. George Carey, the Archbishop of Canterbury, blessed the royal couple as they knelt before him. In his address, he said their marriage had been an example to all. The Queen, with her husband's

encouragement, had carried out her duties with distinction, courage, sacrifice and tolerance.

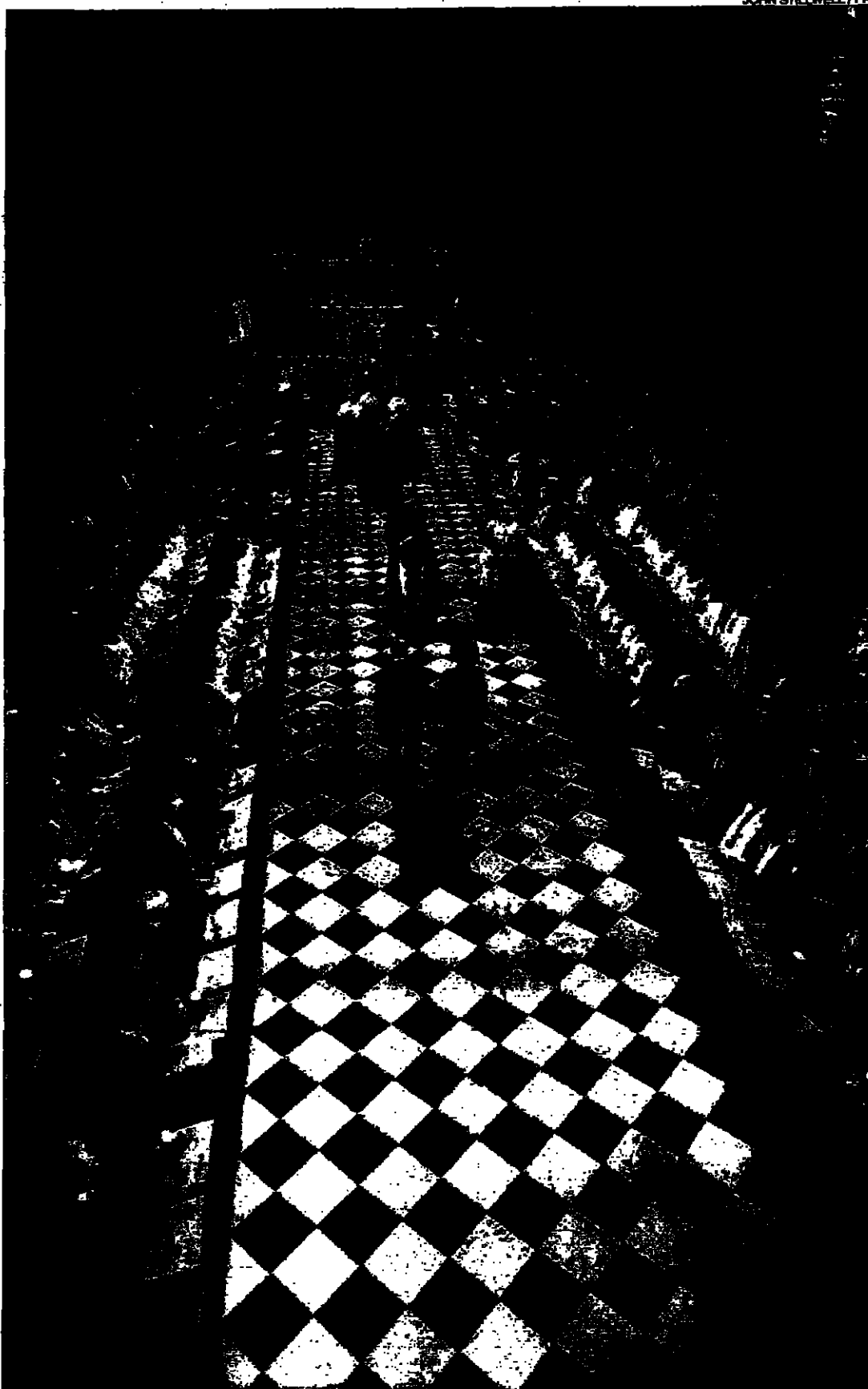
After the service, the couple went on a walkabout outside the Abbey among a crowd lining the pavements six deep. Other guests were conducted by the Prince of Wales on a launch to the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, for lunch.

After a call for pre-lunch drinks with Tony and Cherie Blair at 10 Downing Street, the Prime Minister and his wife joined the Queen and the Duke for another walkabout up Whitehall to the Banqueting House for a lunch, the Government's official anniversary gift. At the Queen's request, many of the 350 guests were drawn from the ranks of ordinary people.

Mr Blair, in proposing a toast to the couple, offered the warmest praise to the Queen. "She is an extraordinarily shrewd and perceptive observer of the world; hers is advice worth having," he said.

Referring to the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, Mr Blair said he knew how deeply it had touched the Queen. "I know too, contrary to some of the hurtful things that were said at the time, how moved you were by the outpouring of grief which followed as, in the security and sanctity of your own home, you sought as a family to help the boys."

In a significant reply, the Queen said that hereditary monarchy, like government, existed only with the support and consent of the people. "For us, a Royal Family, however, the message is often harder to read, obscured as it can be by deference, rhetoric or the conflicting currents of public opinion. But read it we must. I have done my best, with Prince Philip's constant love and help, to interpret it correctly through the years of our marriage and of my reign as your Queen. And we shall, as a family, together try to do so in the future."



The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh at the thanksgiving in Westminster Abbey yesterday

Employee season tickets may get tax relief

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

FIRMS paying for train and bus travel for staff could receive tax exemption under government plans to curb the company car culture.

Gordon Brown's pre-Budget speech next week will herald a shake-up of taxes on employee travel to encourage greater use of public transport and reduce the leisure use of company cars.

Whitehall officials are preparing plans to remove tax liability from annual train and bus tickets, worth up to £5,000, provided free by employers. Inland Revenue rules classify free season tickets as a taxable benefit, although free car parking is not liable to tax. A change would coincide with rules being prepared to limit private mileage in company cars.

Some 260,000 train passengers a year buy annual rail season tickets at a total cost of more than £260 million. Few companies give season tickets to staff, partly because of the tax deterrent.

BAA, the airports operator, is the latest major employer to fall foul of an Inland Revenue authority that forces staff or the company to pay tax on free public transport but not for free car parking.

The company this week announced that it will give annual season tickets to 2,000 Heathrow staff travelling from nearby Slough. However, the offer will incur tax of up to £80 per employee, while free car parking at the airport, worth an estimated £300 a year, is free of tax. The company will pay the tax for its own employees.

Three million cars, or one in ten of all cars, are owned by companies or the self-employed, making Britain one of the biggest providers of employer-owned cars. More than half of new cars are company-owned.

Doctor may face manslaughter case

A doctor is facing a manslaughter charge after a coroner halted an inquest and referred papers about the death of a newborn baby to the Crown Prosecution Service. Helmi Nour delivered the baby with forceps using "grossly excessive" force, a coroner was told. Page 8

Safe haven

An American computer expert has come to Colchester, Essex, after searching the Internet for a safe place to settle with his family. He made his choice when he saw closed-circuit TV pictures. Page 7

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Blair thanks Barclays for doing his paperwork

By NICHOLAS WATT
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TONY BLAIR is benefiting from Labour's improved links with business after securing the backing of Barclays Bank for his constituency office in Sedgefield.

The bank agreed to send a computer expert to help run Mr Blair's office in the village of Trimdon after constituency workers were inundated with letters after the election.

The support from Barclays was disclosed by the Prime Minister in the first Register of Members' Interests since the election which was published yesterday. In his only entry,

under the heading "sponsorship or financial or material support", Mr Blair wrote: "Secondment of assistant to my Sedgefield constituency office by Barclays Bank, Newcastle, for one year from 6 October 1997."

Mr Blair paid warm tribute to Barbara Dow, 28, from Washington, Tyne and Wear, who is helping to set up a new computer system. Mr Blair said: "Barbara is making a huge difference and we are very glad to have her with us."

John Burton, the Prime Minister's agent, said he was delighted. He added: "We are extremely grateful to Barclays Bank for helping us in this

way. The amount of extra work since Mr Blair became Prime Minister has been astronomical."

Labour sources said that Mr Blair's Sedgefield office has been overwhelmed by hundreds of letters. Foreign journalists are constantly on the phone requesting interviews and people in the North East, who live outside the constituency, write in the hope that Mr Blair will be able to help them.

Mr Blair leaves his constituency office after a meeting chaired by President Saddam Hussein. Iraq has accepted the return of UN Special Commission inspectors, including the Americans, the radio said.

Blair benefactor, page 11

Iraq agrees to allow return of inspectors

FROM HASSAN HAFIDEL IN BAGHDAD

IRAQ yesterday approved an accord, worked out with Russia, to allow United Nations arms inspectors, including Americans, to return to the country and resume their work. Baghdad's approval apparently defuses three-weeks of potentially explosive confrontation involving Britain and America.

As America went ahead with its military build-up in the Gulf yesterday, Baghdad radio broadcast a statement issued after a meeting chaired by President Saddam Hussein. "Iraq has accepted the return of UN Special Commission inspectors, including the Americans," the radio said.

The statement added that Iraqi and Russian leaders, including President Yeltsin, had exchanged views which resulted in "an agreement to defuse the crisis. We are happy about it." It said the deal gave Iraq hope that UN sanctions imposed after it invaded Kuwait in August 1990 would be lifted.

In Washington, President Clinton said America was "resolute" in its determination to make Iraq fully comply with UN mandates, and it remained to be seen whether or not Saddam would allow inspectors full access. (Reuters)

Hunt to resume, page 14

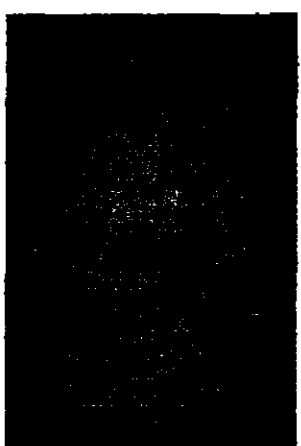
Lone warrior routed York and Lancaster

By SIMON DE BRINELLES

A WELSH butcher who decided that a re-enactment of a Wars of the Roses battle was not bloody enough was jailed yesterday after single-handedly routing both armies.

Leighton Thomas, 24, was among spectators watching 50 enthusiasts from the White Company slog it out with swords and axes during the event at Kidwelly Castle, west Wales, when he decided to intervene. Magistrates at Llanelli were told that he ripped open a beer can with his teeth, then leapt from the crowd yelling: "I'm a Viking butcher and I'll cut you all into little pieces."

The court heard that, fuelled by local ale, the six-footer stood on the drawbridge of the 11th-century castle and challenged the forces of York and Lancaster.



Thomas "fuelled by ale"



Members of the White Company dressed to do battle

to a fight. First he attacked Branwell Beavers, a guard, ripping out chest hairs and ramming his head against the castle door. He then turned on Simon Copey, a minstrel, punching him in the face.

Fearing further attacks, both armies regrouped and locked themselves inside the castle walls. Katherine Jones, prosecuting, told magistrates: "He was making threats to petrol-bomb the castle and was head-butting the door."

Police were called, but Thomas refused to surrender and spat in the face of Michael John, a special constable, as he was arrested. He also made threats.

Thomas later told police that he could not recall the incident, which had followed an argument with his girlfriend. Admitting three offences of assault, he told the magistrates: "I don't know what came over me. My son was born only yesterday and I would like to turn over a new leaf and start a new life."

Lawrence Murphy, the magistrate, said the offences were so serious that he would jail Thomas for six weeks, which would have been three months but for the matters raised in mitigation. Stephen Lloyd, Thomas's solicitor, had said that Thomas was a pleasant young man, except when drunk.

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Carey blesses long and successful union

Marriage that has seen 'profound changes in personal and national life' was celebrated with due pomp, reports Alan Hamilton

THE Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh knelt before the Archbishop of Canterbury in Westminster Abbey yesterday to receive his blessing at a thanksgiving service to mark their golden wedding anniversary.

In the most personal and private moment of a 40-minute service whose tone was celebratory and joyful, Dr George Carey stood before the royal couple and, as the choir sang an anthem, blessed their long and successful union.

In his public address, Dr Carey repeated the Church of England's traditional marriage vows and told the congregation that those vows made by the couple on the same spot in 1947, had been kept through the profoundest of changes in personal and national life.

"The Sovereign of a nation going through such changes, together with her consort, carries at times a heavy burden. That is what sovereignty means and it is something they have shouldered together," Dr Carey said.

"But our Queen, with the profound sustaining of her husband's encouragement and support, has carried out her duties through all of these with distinction, courage, sacrifice and, as we heard yesterday, tolerance. Never an easy task, those of us looking on have known their vocation to have been at times a hard one.

For amidst all the grandeur and magnificence of the office has been the sheer weight of work and responsibility — the times of sorrows and setbacks as well as of joys and triumphs."

Dr Carey continued: "Today we honour the steady dignity with which they have served us and in which our nation and Commonwealth have been richly blessed."

Marriage, Dr Carey said, was a basic building block of any society and the surest foundation of family life. "The fact that some marriages fail should not lead us to a false depreciation of marriage: it is not something we can afford as a nation to abandon because of the difficulties which may be experienced."

In a clear reference to the fact that three of the Queen's children had experienced divorce, Dr Carey continued: "Nor, by celebrating marriage as we do today, do we rebuke or dismiss those for whom it has never been a way of life or whose experience of marriage has been neither as long-lasting nor as secure as the one we honour in this service."

His words were heard by a congregation that included almost the entire British Royal Family including Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, their four children and six grandchildren Princes William and Harry, Peter and Zara Phillips, and Princesses Beatrice and Eugenie. Prince Edward was accompanied by his girlfriend Sophie Rhys-Jones.

In memory of the late Diana, Princess of Wales, her mother Frances Shand Wyndham and her sisters Lady Sarah McCorquodale and Lady Jane Fellowes were present. Virtually the only absentees were Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester, who is 97 and infirm, and the Duchess of York, who was invited to the service but did not attend.

In the rows behind sat the greatest assembly of foreign monarchy seen in London since the Coronation. Also there were members of the Royal Household, personal friends, long-serving staff, and



Prince William with his cousin Zara Phillips — who teased him after he was presented with a posy of flowers by a 14-year-old girl — at the Royal Naval College

BY DAMIAN WHITWORTH

THE six-year-old boy was only asking the question no adult would. "Hello," he said to the strapping young European royal who was beaming down at him. "Who are you?"

The Prince of Orange (for, after some inquiries, it emerged that it was he) paused and then threw back his head and roared. "I like this man," he boomed.

While the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh lunched with the people yesterday the

Prince of Wales and his sons hosted another banquet strictly for British and European royalty and a few friends. Nevertheless, their event proved just as much of a leveller as that at the Banqueting House, thanks to 600 uninhibited children as bemused as anybody by the parade of characters only vaguely familiar from the pages of *Hello*. After the

Westminster Abbey service the 200-strong royal party took a boat downriver from Lambeth Pier to Greenwich and disembarked — giggling and gossiping — at the Royal Naval College.

They were met by a screaming mob, but it could not have been friendlier, composed as it was of young pupils: from four local schools. But that did not

make it any the less dangerous. This mob brandished home-made flags of the many nations represented by the horde of Euro-royalty. The Prince of Wales, leading the way with Princess Margaret, bent down to address a saucer-eyed six-year-old and only narrowly avoided the flag stick lodging itself up a nostril. Six-year-olds do not stand on

ceremony and there was not a bowed head or a curtsy in sight. An alien, ignorant of hundreds of years of deferential treatment of royalty, might have taken the noisy children for the leaders of our society as the adults bowed low to them and shook the proffered hands. The one person the children did know and were keen to meet was Prince William.

He was given a posy of flowers by Rachel Cogsway, 14, and exchanged a few words with her.

"I wanted to give him a kiss but it happened so quickly," said Rachel afterwards. "He seemed very shy." William was teased by his cousin, Zara Phillips.

As the foreign delegation, including seven crowned heads, disappeared inside for lunch, those outside were still wondering who they all were. And who on earth was the bespectacled of a man in a long Dr Who-style scarf?

Royalty lark is child's play



Carey said marriage is building block of society

Monarchy and Government each have a role to play

This is the speech made by the Queen yesterday at the government banquet hosted by the Prime Minister to celebrate her golden wedding.

When Prince Philip and I were married on this day 50 years ago, Britain had just endured six years of war, emerging battered but victorious. Prince Philip had served in the Royal Navy in the Far East, while I was grappling, in the ATS, with the complexities of the combustion engine and learning to drive an ambulance with care.

Today, Prime Minister, we accept your generous hospitality in a very different Britain. The Cold War is over and our country is at peace. The economy in your charge, and which you inherited, is soundly based and growing. And, during these last 50 years, the mass media culture has transformed our lives in any number of ways, allowing us to learn more about our fellow human beings than, in 1947, we would have thought possible.

What a remarkable 50 years they have been: for the world, for the Commonwealth and for Britain. Think what we would have missed if we had never heard the Beatles, or seen Margot Fonteyn dance; never have watched television, used a mobile phone or surfed the Net — or, to be honest, listened to other people talking about surfing the Net.

We would never have heard someone speak from the Moon; never have watched England win the World Cup, or Red Rum three Grand Nationals. We would never have heard that Everest had been scaled, DNA unravelled, the Channel Tunnel built, hip replacements become commonplace. Above all, speaking personally, we would never have known the joys of having children and grandchildren.

Since I came to the throne in 1952, 10 Prime Ministers have served the British people and

have come to see me each week at Buckingham Palace. The first, Winston Churchill, had charged with the cavalry at Omdurman. You, Prime Minister, were born in the year of my Coronation.

You have all had, however, one thing in common. Your advice to me has been invaluable, as has that from your counterparts, past and present, in the other countries of which I am Queen.

I have listened carefully to it all I say, most sincerely, that I could not have done my job without it.

For I know that, despite the huge constitutional difference between a hereditary monarchy and an elected government, in reality the gulf is not so wide. They are complementary institutions, each with its own role to play.

And each, in its different way, exists only with the support and consent of the people. That consent, or the lack of it, is expressed for you, Prime Minister, through the ballot box. It is a tough, even brutal, system but at least the

message is a clear one for all to read. For us, a Royal Family, however, the message is often harder to read, obscured as it can be by deference, rhetoric, or the conflicting currents of public opinion. But read it we must.

I have done my best, with Prince Philip's constant love and help, to interpret it correctly through the years of our marriage and of my reign as your Queen. And we shall, as a family, together try to do so in the future.

It often falls to the Prime Minister, and the Government of the day, to be the bearer of the messages sent from people to Sovereign. Prime Minister, I know that you, like your predecessors, will always pass such messages, as you read them, without fear or favour. I shall value that, and am grateful for your assurances of the loyalty and support of your Government in years to come.

I wish you wisdom and God's help in your determination that Britain should remain a country to be proud of. And, as one working couple

THE QUEEN

to another, Prince Philip and I hope that on March 29, 2030, you and your wife will be celebrating your own golden wedding.

And, talking of the future, I believe that there is an air of confidence in this country of ours just now. I pray that we, people, Government and Royal Family, for we are one, can prove it to be justified and that Britain will enter the next millennium, glad, confident and a truly United Kingdom.

This is, too, an opportunity for Prince Philip and me to offer, in the words of one of the most beautiful prayers in the English language, our 'humble and hearty thanks' to all those in Britain and around the world who have welcomed us and sustained us and our family, in the good times and the bad, so unstintingly over many years.

This has given us strength, most recently during the sad days after the tragedy of Diana's death. It is you, if I may now speak to all of you directly, who have seen us through, and helped us to make our duty fun. We are deeply grateful to you, each and every one.

Yesterday I listened as Prince Philip spoke at Guildhall, and I then proposed our host's health. Today the roles are reversed.

All too often, I fear, Prince Philip has had to listen to me speaking. Frequently we have discussed my intended speech, beforehand and, as you will imagine, his views have been expressed in a forthright manner.

He is someone who doesn't take easily to compliments but he has, quite simply, been my strength and stay all these years, and I, and his whole family, and this and many other countries, owe him a debt greater than he would ever claim, or we shall ever know.

Prime Minister, thank you for helping us to celebrate a very special day in our lives. Philip, over to you."

THE PRIME MINISTER

TONY BLAIR told the Queen that she was "simply the best of British" in a tribute that underlined the growing warmth in the relationship between Prime Minister and Sovereign.

Disclosing that earlier this week the Queen had told him not to be "too effusive", Mr Blair said that she was "unstuffy, unfussed and unfazed by anything". She was, he said, the essence of dignity but it was a dignity that was very much down to earth.

She had a keen sense of humour and a mean ability for mimicry. Mr Blair said that he enjoyed his weekly audience with the Queen, not simply because of her experience, but because she was an "extraordinarily shrewd and perceptive observer of the world. Hers is advice worth having."

He added: "I believe that for both you and Prince Philip, life's chief imperative, what keeps you going, is a simple concept: duty. Duty leading to service."

Downing Street said Mr Blair's speech was a personal and heartfelt tribute. Informal sources suggested that relations between the Queen and Mr Blair inevitably became closer after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

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EVERY WEEKDAY, THE BIG PICTURE.

CHANGING TIMES

TIME FOR BED

VERY VERY FUNNY

"One of the best things I have ever read about the nature of mad, obsessive love...funny, sad and horribly, painfully true"
— Tony Parsons

"David Baddiel has written a wickedly funny book, the perfect bedside companion for restless nights. It won't cure insomnia but it will send you to sleep smiling" — Christina Koning, *Cosmopolitan*

"Brilliantly handled...simultaneously hilarious and desperately poignant"
— David Thomas, *Daily Telegraph*

DAVID BADDIEL

OF ENOUGH IMPORTANCE

Wild-eyed rude boy goes hunting for Mrs B

There are five Commons ministers at the Department of Trade and Industry: a fat one, two thin ones (bearded and beardless), a female one, and an absent one. The absent one is the Secretary of State, Margaret Beckett. Her Shadow, John Redwood, likes to sneer at her caravanning hobby and her disappearances. At Industry Questions yesterday, she had disappeared again. We were told she was in Australia.

And why not? Mrs Beckett is a capable woman. She may feel she has better things to do than justify her caravan to a rude man with wild eyes representing a small, right-wing party centred on the South of England. Were I her, I would be tempted to stay in

Australia until Mr Redwood went away.

The line he took yesterday was to tell MPs that she was "running scared" of him, "Down Under". The implication was that, such was the fear Mr Redwood inspires in the President of the Board of Trade, she had lost her nerve and made a run for it to the other side of the world.

Australians are among the world's keenest caravanners. Briefly one entertained a mental picture of a small caravan site among the gum trees in Woolloomooloo, where, to the sound of the calling kookaburra bird, the President of the Board of Trade and Mr Beckett sip tea in their touring Bessacar Cameo, a nervous eye on the

highway lest Mr Redwood, eyes a-swivel, come tooting up in his Reliant Robin to resume his green-linked denunciations of imagined Beckett conspiracies against the public interest.

So Mrs B was "running scared"? Redwood had a point, though not quite the point he intended. What is undoubtedly true that we are all a little scared of Mr Redwood — but not in the way he thinks. At one stage during July 1995, when it looked possible he might oust John Major and become Prime Minister,

there were some for whom Woolloomooloo became a suddenly attractive option.

Nearly as scary as Redwood is the Industry minister responsible for Employment matters. This is the fat one. Ian McCartney has an incomprehensible Clydeside accent, a pudding-basin haircut and no neck. He is about three feet tall.

Yesterday he seemed to have only one answer to the many Opposition Questions it felt to him to answer. He simply shouts, in a frightful

monotone, that the party opposite lost the general election, and his party won it. As a debating gambit, this palls with repetition.

As an industrial policy, it requires fleshing out. Perhaps McCartney was attempting this when he added (to Redwood): "We're squeaky-clean. You're just squeaky."

Of the two thin ministers, the bearded one (John Battle) reminds us of an Assistant Physics-with-Chemistry (and Special Maths) teacher at a struggling comprehensive.

Raged at (over the sale to foreigners of Rolls-Royce) by Nicholas Winterbottom (C, Macclesfield) and Gwyneth Dunwoody (Lab, Crewe & Nantwich), the beard

quivered nervously. Hell would be an eternity facing this awesome combo. The other thin minister, young Nigel Griffiths, is beardless.

One of Gordon Brown's teenyboppers, he managed to say nothing at all in his reply to Opposition spokesman Cheryl Gillan's question about the pricing of electrical goods — and say it in a faintly self-satisfied way.

Finally, we have the lady minister who was there: Barbara Roche. Jolly, assured and rather impressive, Mrs Roche prefaced her reply to the Tories' Theresa May (Maidenhead) by remarking to the Chair: "I'll be as courteous as I can — she's my pair."

Some things at Westminster go deeper than politics.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Body of rescuer found in sea

The body of Bill Deacon, a helicopter whirler who lost his life while rescuing ten men from a foundering ship off Shetland, was discovered by an RAF Sea King helicopter yesterday ten miles north of the wreck and more than 21 hours after he was swept into the sea by giant waves near the Isle of Bressay.

No Patten case

Chris Patten, the former Governor of Hong Kong, is not to be prosecuted over allegations that he handed classified documents to a journalist, the Attorney-General told the Commons.

Four arrested

Four people, including two journalists, were arrested on suspicion of interfering with jurors in the Old Bailey trial of two men accused of killing three alleged drug dealers. They were later released.

Belfast bomb

The Continuity IRA, a republican splinter group, left a bomb in the grounds outside the Belfast City Hall offices of the Progressive Unionist Party. Army experts destroyed the device.

Plane inquiry

RAF Strike Command is to investigate the firm ERA Sero after a Queen's Flight aircraft, which it maintains, made an emergency landing on November 6 with oil pressure dangerously low.

CORRECTIONS

□ The Ritz London Ltd owns London's Ritz Hotel, not, as wrongly stated in an article (November 19), Mr Mohamed Ali Fayed.
□ Concorde South Eastern did not cancel 300 trains from its winter timetable (report, November 11).

QC asks: were Birmingham Six guilty after all?

Frances Gibb reports on Sir Louis Blom-Cooper's doubts about a controversial miscarriage of justice

A LEADING Queen's Counsel and pillar of the liberal legal establishment has cast doubt on whether the Birmingham Six case was the miscarriage of justice it is widely held to be.

The case, a chief factor in the setting up of the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice which reported in 1993, is regarded as one of the biggest failings of the criminal justice system.

The six men, who were convicted of the 1974 Birmingham public house bombings, were released in 1991. Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, has recently apologised to them and each of the men has been offered compensation.

The Court of Appeal concluded that the jury would probably have found the men not guilty had it known that their confessions were unreliable. But in a new book, *The Birmingham Six and Other Cases*, Sir Louis Blom-Cooper, 71, says that conclusion is open to debate. He says: "Might the circumstantial evidence,

stripped of the embellishments and distractions of protracted proceedings, point to their complicity (perhaps with others unknown or unidentified) in a wicked crime?"

Society must accept "warts and all, the results of the judicial process", he says. But he adds: "We should not instinctively disable ourselves from conducting a constant search and evaluation of the evidence alleged by the Crown as pointing to the six men's implication in the dastardly deed of killing and maiming innocent people."

Sir Louis says that the only safe answer is "agnosticism" although it is not, he says, the only conceivable answer. He clearly distinguishes the case from that of the Guildford Four and other miscarriages of justice.

"Often — rather too often — the ultimate result of the Birmingham Six case is linked with the quashing of other contemporaneous convictions, all being labelled, indiscriminately, as miscarriages of justice and the successful ap-

plicants 'innocent'."

In the case of the Guildford Four, the revelation that the confessions had been unlawfully obtained rendered their convictions both unsafe and unsatisfactory, he says. The convictions of the Birmingham Six were quashed on the grounds that there was an "unfair trial", Sir Louis says.

He cautions against being "too assiduous" in calling into question jury verdicts. Otherwise there was a danger of undermining public confidence in the criminal justice system "even more so than has the conduct of the police officers who were proved ultimately to have fabricated several of the confessions in the Birmingham Six and other cases."

Sir Louis was knighted in 1992 for his work as chairman of the Mental Health Commission and Independent Commission for the Supervision of Standards of Telephone Information Service. He was chairman of the Press Council from 1989 to 1990 after a period as chairman of the Howard League for Penal Re-



Sir Louis Blom-Cooper says Court of Appeal's decision to quash convictions is open to debate

form. He had earlier retired from the Bar after 35 years.

He also chaired the inquiries into the deaths of the battered children Jasmine Beckford and Kimberley Carlisle and the inquiry into Ashworth special hospital,

Merseyside, which earned him praise for his blend of compassion and robust good sense. Sir Louis has written books on such varied subjects as bankruptcy, the A6 murder, the law lords, capital punishment — which he opposed.

Straw uses tag scheme to curb jail numbers

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

UP TO 6,000 prisoners could be released early, with electronic tags, under proposals announced by Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, yesterday to relieve pressure on overcrowded jails.

Prisoners serving between three months and four years in jails in England and Wales would be released up to two months early on condition that they agreed to a curfew of between nine and 12 hours a day.

Prison governors will determine which prisoners should be released early, after taking into account the nature of the crime committed by an offender, the likelihood of him or her reoffending, and the inmate's behaviour in prison.

Mr Straw told MPs that the new home detention curfew would be included in the Crime and Disorder Bill to be published early next year. He said that tagging prisoners for a short period after they left the jail would help them to lead a more structured life. But in a statement to MPs he admitted that the rise in the prison population of 3,400 since the general election to reach 63,000 had reinforced the case for early release linked to electronic tagging.

"No one wants to see an unnecessarily overcrowded

prison system. It would be the height of irresponsibility not to take advantage of modern technology to help to prevent that."

Under existing legislation any prisoner given a sentence of under four years is automatically released halfway through the sentence so under the new order a prisoner given four years could be released on a tag after serving 22 months.

Although the scheme will be open to all prisoners imprisoned for up to four years, Mr Straw sought to reassure the public, saying that it was "improbable" that anyone convicted of violent or sexual crimes would have a sentence cut short.

The Conservatives attacked the proposal as a "massive U-turn" in Government policy. Sir Brian Mawhinney, the Shadow Home Secretary said: "It is now clear that 'tough on crime' means soft on criminals."

He said: "We have seen a significant shift in this country's penal policy from the victim to the criminal and all to save the Chancellor some money." It is estimated that the cost of an electronic tag is £1,400 a month compared with £2,000 to keep a prisoner in a local jail.

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Sex crime victim confronted her attacker in cell

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

THE victim of a sexual attack bluffed her way into a court cell so she could personally lambast her assailant for the trauma he had put her through. The 30-year-old woman told prison officers she was from the man's solicitor and was left alone with him for 80 minutes.

"He was bewildered, startled and frightened as she told him, in no uncertain terms, the horror she had endured, the disgust she felt and the trauma which followed the wickedness of his actions," Susan Klonin, the man's barrister, told Manchester Crown Court.

"He was left thoroughly and utterly chastised and they ended up in tears together. That confrontation, the like of which one cannot imagine,

taught him more than any prison sentence or group therapy could ever do."

Miss Klonin was mitigating for Raymond Curwen, 27, who admitted indecently assaulting the woman as she waited at a bus stop. Curwen also admitted indecently assaulting a teenage girl at the same bus stop. When questioned by detectives, he confessed to approaching up to a dozen more women as they stood alone.

"Experiences of this kind suffered by lone women are the very stuff of nightmares," Judge Rhys Davies said as he jailed Curwen for six years.

"You are a dangerous and deviant human being and I have to consider the risk you represent to the public," Curwen, of Heston Chapel,

Stockport, chose his victims at the same bus stop in Didsbury, Manchester. He told them he had a knife and indecently assaulted them before fleeing to a pub car park, where he had left his car.

Police had no clues to his identity until Curwen was arrested and put on probation for making malicious telephone calls to women in shops. He gave a sample for the DNA database and was eventually linked to the two indecent assaults.

He was questioned about the attacks and admitted he had approached other women "for the thrill", but although police investigated the other incidents he was never charged with them. Miss Klonin said Curwen was being held in cells at the Crown Court building, after an earlier court appearance, when his first victim claimed she worked for his solicitors.

"It was a unique event in my 27-year experience as she gained access to him by a ruse and confronted him," Miss Klonin told the court. "He ended up offering her friendship after the case is all over and even offered her driving lessons. Of course, she totally rejected it but it was a unique circumstance of a lesson having been taught to him."

Woman set on fire in park

Police are trying to establish a motive for an attack on a young woman who was doused with petrol and set alight as she and her boyfriend walked through a park. Heidi Brown, 23, is critical but stable in hospital with severe burns. She was attacked on Wednesday evening as she and Chris Kelly, 28, her longtime partner, walked through the park at Bedhill, East Sussex. Police are trying to trace four youths who Mr Kelly said were responsible. Police are asking Mr Kelly, who has been released from hospital, to provide them with more information.



The scene of the raid on Cartier's jewellery workshops in London on Wednesday evening

Ladder may lead police to Cartier robbers

BY STEWART TENDLER
AND PAUL WHITTAKER

POLICE were yesterday trying to trace the source of a ladder left after the raid on Cartier's jewellery workshops.

Two masked raiders had crept across the roof of New Bond Street, Central London, to reach the workshops, Scotland Yard said. The aluminium folding ladder was put against a security fence so they could smash a glass panel. Police sources said the armed raiders may have had inside intelligence.

The raid, which took place on Wednesday evening, was clearly carefully planned: the robbers attacked one of the few glass panels on the roof not protected by a metal grille. They seemed to know what they were looking for and had timed the raid so that at least one safe was still open while those remaining finished their work. Two employees were threatened and handcuffed.

Arnaud Bamberg, managing director of Cartier, yesterday put the losses at below £1 million. Cartier, founded in Paris in 1847, has a long reputation for fine jewellery of the highest quality.

Police said that passers-by might have seen the men carrying the ladder and that they may parked a vehicle in the area. Anyone with information should contact the incident room on 0181-247 7931.

Beaujolais nouveau is back in the purple

Jane MacQuitty recommends vintage's best value

THE most hyped and least liked vintage of beaujolais nouveau celebrated its 25th anniversary yesterday. In 1972 a *Sunday Times* columnist, Allan Hall, challenged his readers to be the first to put a bottle of the year's beaujolais nouveau on his desk. The great beaujolais race was born.

The race has become a charity challenge. This year's recipient is the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children. The usual round of beaujolais breakfasts in wine bars and cut-price stacks in supermarkets nudged yesterday's sales over 100,000 cases. By the weekend, they could well have topped the 120,000 cases sold in Britain last year. For once, the usual crop of complaints about this often thin, anemic red were mostly absent. No doubt Hall's unlucky choice gave the wine

a bad reputation from the start. But the highly publicised race, with beaujolais nouveau brought to Britain by everything from elephant and parachute to motorised bathmats, did little to convince discerning drinkers that nouveau should be part of their year.

Yesterday, however, the 1997 beaujolais nouveau, one of the earliest vintages on record, left an unusually sweet taste in the mouth. The region's sunny, early harvest has produced small, ripe, thick-skinned gamay grapes. Though not a great year like the superb '95, the vintage is a good one and, with its lack of acidity and the much improved sterling franc rate, will be a highly commercial year. British merchants have dramatically upped their orders.

I tasted the ten most widely

distributed beaujolais nouveau and can report that the wine is a pretty crimson-purple with a lively, ripe, juicy, boiled-sweet style that should please all. These are the best of the bunch:

1. Georges Dubouche (Threshcr, Wine Rack and Bottoms Up, £4.99). Ripe, meaty beaujolais with plenty of *bombons acidule*, in this case cherries, raspberries and bananas, on the nose and palate.
2. Auguste Berthier (Sainsbury, £2.99). JS should have no trouble selling out by the weekend of this light, breezy, joyous beaujolais nouveau, full of light, juicy cherry and banana fruit. *The Times* best buy.
3. Joseph Drouhin (Majestic Wine Warehouse, £3.99). A deep, brilliant crimson-purple leads on to a zesty, plummy palate.

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Wild West surfers wash up in Colchester



Sharone and Juergen Neuhoff with daughter Alexandra: they saw Colchester through Actual Size's remote camera

An American family fed up with rising crime found a safe haven via the Internet in old-world Essex, reports Adam Fresco

ONCE families headed west to the New World in search of a better life. Now an American couple has fled back to the old world, driven out by rising crime.

Fed up with the vicious gang wars in Albuquerque, New Mexico, once home to Billy the Kid, Juergen Neuhoff was faced with choices as diverse as remote Alaska, bustling but crime-free Japan or the Australian outback.

But one night the computer expert finally found on the Internet what he was looking for, as he focused on a closed-circuit television camera showing Colchester, Essex.

For nine months Mr Neuhoff, 43, and his wife Sharone studied the live picture showing Trinity Square, a pedestrianised part of Britain's oldest recorded town. The couple also embarked on thorough research of the area.

Making full use of the Internet, they looked at the education system for their 12-year-old daughter, checked the health services available, public transport and even looked up weather charts for the area.

With their eyes firmly fixed on the square, featuring a

bank, some shops, telephone boxes and a bus stop, they scanned the faces of the people walking along, young and old, to see if they looked glum or happy. They also kept a note of what they were wearing to make sure it was not too cold for them.

Mrs Neuhoff, 43, said: "It looked such a friendly place with happy people out walking or shopping. They seemed kind and respectful to each other and there were families

going out together with babies in prams.

"We got up early in the morning because of the seven-hour time difference and watched Colchester by day and then saw it at night too."

"It was so peaceful. There were no muggers jumping out of alleys or people being molested in the street. There were no robberies or threatening gangs wandering around and we hardly ever saw a policeman so we reckoned it

was a pretty safe place." The county has crime figures well below the national average, notably so for violent crime, which is nearly half the national figure. A recent survey revealed residents in Colchester were more satisfied with their surroundings than people anywhere else in Britain.

The family finally moved in to their three-bedroomed, semi-detached home in the summer and so far are happy

with their decision. Mr Neuhoff, who was born in Germany, said: "There is no paradise anywhere in the world but Colchester is good for us."

"We watched the area for some time and noticed people were friendly, and there were no guns or criminals running around. You can go out at night and not worry too much about getting shot. Our daughter can also go to school on public transport and we

don't have to worry about her being involved in drive-by shootings."

In Albuquerque innocent people got caught up in violence, Mrs Neuhoff said. "An elderly man was drinking coffee in his kitchen when a gang drove past his house and thinking that his nephew was inside they sprayed the house with bullets. He was hit and died."

The killing of a friend's young son proved the last

straw for the family. Mrs Neuhoff added: "He was crossing the road on his bike when a car deliberately drove straight into him. It was driven by a teenager who wanted to get into a street gang but who had to prove himself by killing someone first."

Their house in the city, which has a population of almost half a million, was in a mixed neighbourhood of whites, blacks and Hispanics.

Mrs Neuhoff said: "The schools have metal detectors to stop children carrying knives and guns. We did not want Alexandra to grow up in that sort of environment."

"Here she can walk through the town and we don't have to worry. Back in the States we would never dream of letting her walk anywhere in the city. We always drove her because it was too dangerous to go on foot."

"Once we decided that it looked wholesome and good, we needed to know about things like house prices, transport and education."

Mr Neuhoff is a longtime user of the Internet and works as a computer-writer helping computer programmers.

The street camera Web site was set up by an Internet services company which provides Web sites for local businesses. Gary Leach, who runs Actual Size Internet Solutions with his partner Jamie Clary, said: "We were knocked out. The woman just walked in and told us she had moved from America to Colchester because she had seen our street cam site."

The Internet address is: <http://www.actual.co.uk/streetcam.html>

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Albuquerque: site amid barren desert settled by Spanish in 17th century. Indians drove out pioneers but by 1790 a population of 6,000 had built up. Wild West home of Billy the Kid, right. Today a centre for shipping and farming, the communications industry is a big employer. Last year the 426,736 residents suffered 48,253 crimes. There were: 70 murders, 375 forcible rapes, 1,998 robberies, 3,824 aggravated assaults, 9,037 burglaries, 25,961 thefts, 6,988 car thefts and 188 arson attacks.

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Doctor fled to Sudan leaving family behind, reports Mark Henderson

Mr Nour, who was not at the hearing, is thought to have



"He was pulling with and without contractions. He made a number of pulls," she said. "I have never seen that degree of force or way of pulling. He was jiggling the



Queen Charlotte's: doctor has not returned since death of Amos Tutt an hour after his forceps delivery

Pulling out of time with contractions and moving forceps from side to side were not accepted practice, she told the court. Dr. Allen said she had been very concerned and had

After as many as ten pulls, more than three times as

baby's heartbeat, said she became so concerned about Mr. Nour's methods that she left the room to find a senior doctor for help. "It was considerable traction, that made me feel uncomfortable, and the need to seek senior assistance, which I have never had to do before."

Amie, she said, found a junior doctor and an off duty sister, who bled another senior registrar who arrived as Amos was born. Sister Evans also said Mr Nour had ignored her twice when she asked if he needed a second opinion on the labour complications, and had said nothing when Dr Tutt became concerned and she suggested a Caesarean section. The pathologist who

section. The pathologist who performed the post-mortem examination on Amos said he had never before seen such extensive injuries, which had been caused by the forceps being used with "grossly excessive" force. The hospital dismissed him a few days after the incident, an internal enquiry found him to have breached basic obstetric practices, and his case has been referred to the General Medical Council.

Dr Tutt, 30, and his wife, from Fulham, West London left the hearing without comment which was adjourned for a future date, where it is hoped a final verdict will be given. After the hearing a spokesman for Queen Charlotte's Hospital said Mr Nouri had over six years' relevant experience in British hospitals before his appointment in April.

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Hindley set on challenge to 'life is life' ruling

MYRA HINDLEY is to mount a legal challenge next month to the Home Secretary's confirmation that she must spend the rest of her life in jail.

Hindley, who is in Durham prison, was told earlier this week that Jack Straw had endorsed the decision of his predecessors that she must die in prison. A "suicide watch" has since been put on her.

The Home Office said that Mr Straw had considered all reports on Hindley, 54, who was jailed in 1966 for her part in the Moors murders. "He has looked at papers on her life and, which was set by a predecessor, and he has made a decision that he will not part from that. Life will mean life."

The decision was condemned by Lord Longford, who has campaigned for Hindley's release, and the civil rights group Liberty, which said it was not for politicians or public opinion to keep people in jail.

Lord Longford said he had total disgust and contempt for Mr Straw. "I am very sorry indeed that a high-minded man, a Christian Socialist like Jack Straw, should have taken that decision," the peer told BBC Radio 4. "Of course it's all as a result of the horrifying pressure exerted by the tab-

Richard Ford reports on the next phase of campaign by Moors murderer to win freedom

loids year after year. This woman was a good, young Catholic until she ran into, began to work under, a very gifted but mentally disturbed man, Ian Brady. She was an infatuated accomplice 31 years ago. She's now a good woman, as many Catholic priests who know her will attest."

The National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders said the decision that someone should remain in jail for life should not be taken by a politician.

Hindley has served 31 years of a life sentence for the murder of Lesley Ann Downey, 10, and Edward Evans, 17. She confessed ten years ago that she had also killed Keith Bennett, 12, and Pauline Reade, 16, and buried their bodies on Saddleworth Moor,

near Manchester. She returned to Durham jail on Tuesday after a temporary transfer to Highpoint prison in Suffolk so that she could receive visits from Nina Wilde, a friend.

Ian Brady, her co-accused, is in Ashworth top security mental hospital on Merseyside where his health has broken down. He accepts that he will never be released but Hindley has fought a lengthy campaign to win her freedom.

The latest phase will occur next month when the Lord Chief Justice will hear her challenge against David Waddington's original decision as Home Secretary to raise her minimum sentence from 30 years to a whole life. That decision was endorsed by Michael Howard and now by Mr Straw. Even if Hindley's application for judicial review succeeds, the Home Secretary still has the final say on whether she should be released.

The Parole Board has recommended that she is suitable for open prison conditions. However, Prison Service sources say it would be impractical to hold her in an open jail because of fears that she could be attacked by members of the public.



Robbie Williams, above before an earlier hearing, must pay six months' commission to his manager, Nigel Martin-Smith, above right

Row with manager may cost singer £1m

By Philip Davies Broughton

ROBBIE WILLIAMS, the pop singer, is facing a bill of up to £1 million after losing a High Court case brought against him by his former manager.

Mr Williams, 23, was once the cheeky heart of the pop band Take That, until at the height of their success he found drink, drugs and football to be preferable to squalid fans. He left the band in July 1995, calling his fellow members "selfish,

arrogant and thick". As part of his contract, however, he was obliged to retain Take That's manager, Nigel Martin-Smith, for a six-month notice period until February 1996.

Mr Justice Ferris said: "Since the time when Robbie Williams left the group he has refused or failed to pay to Mr Martin-Smith some of the remuneration which Mr Martin-Smith claims to be payable to him under the management agreement."

Lawyers for Mr Williams had

claimed that he was not obliged to make these payments because his obligations were terminated shortly after he left the group. But the judge ruled that during this six-month period Mr Martin-Smith was entitled to a 20 per cent commission on Mr Williams's recording earnings. Mr Justice Ferris said that Mr Williams was obliged to pay Mr Martin-Smith £90,000 — 20 per cent of the £450,000 deal that Mr Williams signed with BMG records after leaving Take That.

But Mr Martin-Smith was not entitled to earnings on Mr Williams's slice of Take That spin-offs — in particular a book called *Take That — Our Greatest Hits*.

The judge ordered an account of further commission payments and an inquiry into possible further damages in respect of Mr Williams's breach of the agreement. The singer will have to pay most of the costs, which will increase his final bill towards £1 million. His lawyers are to appeal.

Architects blow a fuse over Christmas lights

By Philip Davies Broughton

THE horrors of Christmas street lighting are to be addressed by ten leading architects next week with an exhibition at the Museum of London. Most efforts at brightening up a shopping district for Christmas, they feel, are garish and unsophisticated.

Among the suggestions for Oxford Street in London by the RIBA Journal's Campaign for Better Christmas Lights is pedestrianisation and turning it into a "winter wonderland", or "bringing the grotto out of the department stores and into the street". Other ideas include decorating the buses which trundle up and down the street, making them part of the decorations; arranging a Mexican wave of lights the length of the street; and hanging a giant disco ball surrounded by projections in the middle of Oxford Circus.

The architects involved include Michael Wilford and

Partners and Lifschutz Davidson as well as the fashionable new lighting company, General Lighting and Power.

John Walsh, editor of the RIBA Journal, said that though street lighting had been improved after the Queen's Coronation in 1953, when a great interest was taken in street architecture, interest and imagination had since fallen off.

Last week, Yves Saint Laurent, the French fashion company, was told it could not sponsor the lights in Regent Street as the planned display was too heavy on advertising.

Though Mr Walsh criticised the turning of London's shopping streets into little more than giant, illuminated billboards, he said: "Sponsorship is essential but the lighting could be done with much more imagination and taste."

Leading article, page 21

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Genuine consultation or just a clever marketing ploy?

GORDON BROWN will next Tuesday try to change the way that economic policy is debated in Britain. Having dropped the previous name of Green Budget to avoid confusion with environmental issues, the more modestly titled *Pre-Budget Report* will set out the main economic options ahead of decisions in the March Budget. Traditional Budget purdah largely disappeared during the relaxed Kenneth Clarke regime, but has now been formally buried. But will this be any more than a skilful exercise in "new" Labour marketing?

Economic announcements have evolved over the past few years. In the 1980s, the autumn statement in November included decisions on public spending and the latest

economic forecasts. This was followed by the spring Budget with tax changes and small revisions to spending plans. From 1993, the year of the two Budgets, these two statements were brought together in a unified statement in late November with merely an updating of the forecasts in July. This framework has altered this year partly because of the timing of the election. Mr Brown brought in his Budget in early July and said the usual public spending round would not occur this year, since Labour has stuck to the inherited Tory plans, with some reallocation in favour of health and education.

Next Tuesday's statement will include the usual autumn forecasts — for instance, showing that public

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

borrowing is falling faster than expected in July. We are to have a code of fiscal stability, on the same lines as in New Zealand, imposing legal obligations to publish medium and long-term fiscal forecasts and targets. This is supposed to demonstrate the Government's commitment to virtue: the test will be when spending and borrowing are rising sharply.

But in characteristic fashion, showing his wide range across Whitehall, Mr Brown will produce a progress report on the whole of economic, industrial and social

policy, covering investment and productivity, labour market and welfare reform, as well as options for tax changes. This partly reflects Mr Brown's view that the Budget is now less about "the national cake" than Britain's place in the international economy. He intends to set out broad principles and various options for change. These will cover corporate taxation, earned income tax credit and individual savings account (replacing Rps and Tessa), where a consultative paper will appear next month.

Such an exercise has two problems: first, ensuring that taxpayers do not take anticipatory action before final proposals are announced in the spring Budget, and, second, preventing powerful lobby-

ing against change. That limits how specific Mr Brown can be. Some former Tory Chancellors have already warned about the dangers of lobbying and their preference for surprise. But these problems are inherent in any opening up of government and are more than offset by the chance for fuller discussion of important changes before they are announced. This could avoid the difficulties after the July Budget when Mr Brown and his advisers failed to think through the serious implications for international corporations of the proposal on foreign income dividends.

In other areas, notably welfare reform, and the interaction of tax and benefits, policy is still develop-

ing. While Mr Brown may be tempted just to restate general intentions, he should outline some of the more specific options which are currently flowing to and fro across Whitehall. For instance, the Chancellor remains attached to the income tax credit despite the criticisms of many economists and worries about benefiting men rather than women. The Treasury has always been reluctant to share its dominant say over tax and economic changes with the Cabinet let alone with outsiders. Mr Brown also temperamentally likes to keep all the cards in his hand. His first task will therefore be to show that the consultation is genuine.

PETER RIDDELL

Wallpaper company defends Irvine

By POLLY NEWTON

THE company supplying new wallpaper for the Lord Chancellor's official rooms at Westminster explained yesterday why it cost almost £60,000.

The wallpaper is the most expensive item on a £333,000 bill for renovations carried out so far. Lord Irvine of Lairg has been criticised over the cost.

Cole and Son, of North London, uses techniques and printing blocks dating back more than 150 years to create papers exactly like those designed by Augustus Pugin for the Palace of Westminster in the last century. The paper is made on the company's own mill at its premises in Islington. Each colour is applied separately by hand and left to dry before the next is added.

Dennis Hall, consultant to Cole and Son, said that criticism of Lord Irvine was unfair. The work being done was not outside the ordinary programme of refurbishment at Westminster and the wallpaper was being provided at a relatively low price because the company regarded the work as important.

However, he said, the cost would normally have been spread over a longer period. "The unfortunate thing about Lord Irvine was that he wanted the whole thing done in one fell swoop. We don't normally do it that way."

There are 17 areas to be papered including offices, lavatories and large reception rooms with double height ceilings. Mr Hall said the job would require about 350 rolls of paper.

The total bill for work on the apartments, which are to be opened to the public, is expected to be £650,000.

Blair benefactor funded Howard's leadership bid

TONY BLAIR had financial backing in the run-up to the general election from a multi-millionaire Eurosceptic industrialist who also supported Michael Howard's campaign for the Tory leadership.

Sir Emmanuel Kaye gave £10,000 to Mr Howard months after providing generous support for Mr Blair's office in opposition, according to the latest edition of the Register of Members' Interests, which was published yesterday. Sir Emmanuel, 83, the founder and chairman of the steel and office supplies firm Kaye Enterprises, was one of eight wealthy industrialists who provided £49,000 for Mr Howard's leadership campaign in June.

Months earlier he gave generous support to the "blind trust" that provided millions of pounds to finance Mr Blair's office. Sir Emmanuel

Register of MPs' interests shows generosity on two fronts, writes Nicholas Watt

Nicholas Watt

was approached by Lord Levy, the record company boss and tennis partner of Mr Blair, who was the driving force behind the trust.

The coincidence emerged yesterday after Mr Howard, the former Home Secretary, disclosed details in the register of the donations to his unsuccessful campaign. There were no details of Mr Blair's blind trust in his entry in the register — he is not obliged to declare such donations — but

Sir Emmanuel's support for Labour became known over the weekend.

It is understood that Sir Emmanuel, who has won several Queen's Awards during his lengthy and successful business career, supported Mr Howard because of his trenchant criticisms of the European single currency. In February last year Sir Emmanuel launched a scathing attack on EMU in a letter to *The Times* which was jointly signed by some of Britain's leading businessmen.

The Prime Minister will have a chance to thank him personally for his support next month at a gala lunch for people who supported his blind trust. Sir Emmanuel, with Lord Levy, will attend the £250-a-head gala lunch organised by the Labour Friends of Israel to mark the 50th anniversary of the creation of the state.

The financial support provided to the contenders for the Tory leadership election were one of the main features of yesterday's register, which showed a marked drop in MPs' outside earnings. William Hague raised more than £100,000 for his successful campaign. His greatest supporter was Lord Harris of Peckham, the carpet tycoon whose company Harris Ventures donated £74,000. The Carphone Warehouse provided scores of mobile telephones and pagers.

Kenneth Clarke managed to



Sir Emmanuel Kaye with Margaret Thatcher during a visit to his company when she was Prime Minister in 1990

raise £42,000. The former Chancellor's greatest supporter was the industrialist Nat Puri, who is Britain's tenth richest Asian.

Sir Geoffrey Leigh, the chairman of Allied London Properties, gave Mr Clarke £5,000. He also gave Stephen Dorrell, the former Health Secretary, who pulled out of the leadership race, £25,000. Mr Dorrell was embarrassed yesterday at having failed to declare the donation. He has since written to Mr Blair, Mr Wilton, the registrar of interests, Mr Dorrell said: "The donation was not declared because I only finalised details of the payment last week."

John Redwood, the Shadow Trade and Industry Secretary, disclosed in the register that

his leadership campaign was financed by his think-tank, Conservative 2000, which provided £4,772. The former MP David Evans paid £10,000 towards the cost of printing leaflets.

The register shows that former Tory ministers who had no outside interests before the election have since taken up scores of directorships. Mr Charles Clarke, Secretary of State for the Environment, took up directorships of United and Foreign and Colonial Businesses Trust. The former Labour Minister Nicholas Soames has taken up three directorships and also acts as an adviser to four companies, including the motorway service chain Welcome Break.

The influx of Labour MPs means that there is a sharp decline in total outside earnings.

In his introduction to the register, Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, said that the number of entries for earnings over £1,000 had fallen by two thirds.

Aside from the directorships and lists of shares in the register, there are some less conventional declarations. Nigel Evans, Tory MP for South West Devon, apparently a nightclubber with complimentary membership of *Stringfellow's* night club, Smith, Labour MP for Basseton, has declared a free haircut.

Barbara Follett, the new Labour MP for Stevenage, must have a curious relationship with her thriller writer husband. Her only entry is: "Communications consultant to Ken Follett."



Evans: nightclubber with free membership of Stringfellows



Soames: adviser to a chain of motorway service stations

Ministers shrug off revolt over benefits

By JILL SHERMAN
CHIEF POLITICAL
CORRESPONDENT

THE Government insisted yesterday that there would be no rethink on its plans to cut benefit for single parents despite a growing revolt from Labour backbenchers.

Downing Street argued that there was a clear majority in favour of the Government's approach and said there would be no reversal of the policy initiated by the Tories to cut benefits for single parents by up to £11 a week.

Tony Blair is facing his most serious revolt since the election over the issue and yesterday at least 55 Labour MPs signed a Commons motion calling on the Government to reconsider.

On Wednesday MPs gave Harriet Harman a hard time at a meeting of the Parliamen-

tary Labour Party, saying that she had reneged on promises she made last year to repeal the Tory cuts. Some believed that the Government could be persuaded to change its mind because of better than expected economic prospects.

But this was ruled out by Downing Street yesterday. "There is a clear majority in favour of the Government's approach," a spokesman said. "Given that this was agreed before the election then it is a government policy."

Nevertheless there were signs that ministers were prepared to make minor concessions over other benefit policies that they had inherited from the Tories.

During the committee stage of the Social Security Bill, Keith Bradley, the Social Security Minister, made clear that Labour would not reject a plan to reduce the period for

which benefits could be backdated from 12 months to one month. But Mr Bradley spelt out a series of hardship cases that would be exempt. These included the deaf and the blind, those with serious disabilities or any claimant in a domestic emergency.

Earlier Ms Harman gave a robust defence of the policy to cut single-parent benefits, which has nearly been through all its parliamentary stages in the Commons. But MPs will have the chance to put down amendments during the final report stage in order to force a vote.

Ms Harman said it was an example of the "hard choices" ministers had to take in keeping to departmental spending limits. MPs had "enthusiastically backed" the Government's new deal to get people back to work.

"What we're doing is imple-



Harman: accused of reneging on promises

menting the manifesto to help lone mothers get work and be better off and I don't think that there's anybody in the party who doesn't share our determination to tackle social exclusion."

The Commons motion was first tabled in July but appeared again on the Order Paper yesterday because so many MPs signed on Wednesday night. So far 80 MPs, including many Liberal Democrats, have signed the resolution, but the rebels are confident of gaining more signatures.

Dome organisers criticised by MPs

By POLLY NEWTON, POLITICAL REPORTER

MPs ACCUSED the Millennium Commission yesterday of failing to provide detailed plans for the dome exhibition at Greenwich.

The attack came from members of the Commons Select Committee on Culture, Media and Sport as they heard evidence from Eric Sorensen, the chief executive of the Millennium Commission, and Simon Jenkins, a commissioner. Claire Ward (Lab, Watford) said there was little information about the contents, although the structure had attracted huge publicity. "It's a bit like Cadbury's developing a wrapper without deciding what the chocolate is going to be."

Gerald Kaufman, the Labour chairman of the committee, said he had been told that there were no plans for an internal transport system to

carry visitors around. "I'm a wholehearted enthusiast for the project, but things like that need to be thought out a great deal more carefully."

Defending the commission, Mr Jenkins said it was the dome itself that would provide the main attraction. "If you can remember the Festival of Britain, nobody remembers the contents, they just remember the building... I believe people will want to go and see the Dome."

Lord Rogers of Riverside, the architect of the dome, said that after the exhibition the "umbrella" structure could be turned into a "village in an atrium" or a university.

IN PARLIAMENT

TODAY in the Commons: debates on review of child justice and legal aid; funding and administration of further education colleges. The House of Lords is not sitting.

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Kremlin purge gives Chernomyrdin boost

PRESIDENT YELTSIN yesterday ordered sweeping changes in his Cabinet, and demoted two young Deputy Prime Ministers in the forefront of Russia's reforms. One result of the purge is a boost for Viktor Chernomyrdin, his Prime Minister.

Mr Yeltsin's action against Anatoli Chubais, the Deputy Prime Minister involved in a bribery scandal, was an attempt to end seven days of political turmoil. Speaking for the first time since the crisis began, Mr Yeltsin confirmed that Mr Chubais would be stripped of his main portfolio, that of Finance Minister.

The job goes to Mikhail Zadornov, the liberal chairman of the parliamentary budget committee, in a gesture intended to placate the State Duma, the lower house of parliament, which had threatened to block the budget unless Mr Chubais was sacked. "I have asked the Duma deputies and Speaker Gennadi Seliznyov to pass the budget and bring this matter to a close," Mr Yeltsin said.

The removal of young reformers strengthens the hand of the Prime Minister, Richard Beeston writes

The move is a serious blow to Mr Chubais, 42, one of Russia's most talented politicians, the architect of the privatisation programme, and the brains behind Mr Yeltsin's re-election last year. His downfall began last week when it was revealed that he and four members of his team had received an advance payment of \$450,000 (£265,000) for a still unwritten book about privatisation in Russia.

The publisher is owned by a leading banking group that has won several controversial privatisation bids.

Associates of Mr Chubais, including Maksim Boiko, the former Privatisation Minister, were sacked at the weekend, and the repercussions have extended far and wide. The Kremlin announced yesterday that Boris Nemtsov, the young

Deputy Prime Minister, who is not involved in the scandal but is allied to Mr Chubais, was also losing his portfolio as Energy Minister, which goes to Sergei Kiriyenko, his deputy.

Despite the purge, it was not clear yesterday whether the reshuffle would be enough to satisfy the opposition-led Duma. The Communist Party, the largest faction, again threatened to undermine the Government by blocking the 1998 budget, which is to have its first reading next month. The party is also likely to try to squeeze yet further concessions out of Mr Yeltsin before the vote.

But the President will have to be careful about taking further steps against his reformers. In the eyes of many Western investors and governments,

Mr Chubais and his team of technocrats were regarded as the best guarantee that economic reforms would be pushed through in the last three years of Mr Yeltsin's presidency.

The clear winner from the current turmoil is Mr Chernomyrdin, who has risen above the fray and has emerged yet again as a pillar of stability amid the political chaos. Although long regarded as too uncharismatic to succeed Mr Yeltsin, the unflappable Prime Minister has seen his popularity rise as younger, less experienced, politicians pull each other to pieces in public power struggles.

"Everyone seems to have decided that everything is changing, everything is bad, and that the departure of one or two persons means a catastrophe. Nothing of the sort," Mr Chernomyrdin declared.

"Whatever the changes in the Government, there will never be a change in its policy as long as its chairman Chernomyrdin is there," he added.



Rail tanker wagons full of petrol lie burning on a track after a freight train derailed and exploded yesterday on its way through Elsterwerda station in Brandenburg, northeastern Germany. Police said that at least two

Two die in rail crash inferno

firefighters were killed and several rescue workers injured, three of them seriously. Two of the carriages burst into flames, which spread to

the station roof and destroyed one of its buildings. No members of the public were reported hurt, but a further fifteen carriages

were destroyed and dozens of cars and bicycles parked at the station were burnt. Police ordered hundreds of residents in the town to evacuate. The cause of the accident was under investigation. (AP)

EU states poised to sign pact on curbing unemployment

FROM CHARLES BREMNER AND ANDREW PIERCE IN LUXEMBOURG

BRITAIN and its EU partners will commit themselves today to a Maastricht-style pact on curbing unemployment after a special summit that opened amid rival claims from the left-wing Governments of France and Britain that Europe was espousing their model for reform.

As Tony Blair flew into Luxembourg last night, 20,000 demonstrators, mainly from France and Belgium, reminded the battalions of dignitaries that the EU's 18 million jobless expected more than words from the summit, the first such session devoted entirely to employment.

Mr Blair and his 14 EU colleagues are to endorse a set of modest job-promoting guidelines that reflect an emerging European consensus on the best approach to healing the crushing rate of

unemployment in the big continental states. Jean-Claude Juncker, the Luxembourg Prime Minister, said the plan had good prospects because it was modelled on the Maastricht treaty's successful system of mutual monitoring in economic performance.

The Prime Minister said on arriving in Luxembourg that he was confident the summit would formulate policies that would conform with Britain's vision for reducing unemployment. Mr Blair, without naming the French, predicted that there would be overwhelming resistance to any moves towards old-fashioned reflation policies. "I believe we will see a shift away from the old ideas about how we create jobs. We will focus on education and skills, and making people more employable in different types of labour markets. It will

be a big step forward and it will leave some of the old ideas behind."

At the opening of the summit last night Mr Blair was joined by Romano Prodi and Goran Persson, the Italian and Swedish Prime Ministers, in a joint call to their colleagues to "give a clear message to the governments and peoples of Europe that job creation depends on promoting the competitiveness of enterprises and the employability of the workforce."

The employment guidelines pledge Europe in general terms to more flexibility in labour markets and welfare reform and towards lower taxes. They also contain provisions for state-backed training schemes and negotiations between management and unions on modernising working methods.

Briton tells of Bosnia massacre

The Hague: A British peacekeeper yesterday described the horrific aftermath of a massacre in the mostly Muslim village of Ahmici, central Bosnia, in April 1993.

In testimony to the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Sergeant Andre Kujawinski of the Cheshire Regiment spoke of "burnt-out houses, the corpses of women and children scattered in fields, and the body of a father cradling his lifeless son. He had been sent there to recover a broken-down United Nations truck."

General Thomas Blaskic, 37, a Bosnian Croat, has pleaded not guilty to 20 war crimes charges, including the slaughter of at least 100 Muslims, allegedly committed by troops under his command from May 1992 to January 1994. He faces life imprisonment if convicted. (AP)

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Christina 'coronary' scorned by Onassis trustees

FROM JOHN CARR IN ATHENS

THE death nine years ago of Christina Onassis, mother of the present heiress to the \$500m Onassis fortune, remains a mystery, the trustees of the money allege.

In yesterday's issue of *Ta Nea*, the Athens daily, Stelios Papadimitriou, the Onassis Foundation president, said he never believed the official report that a heart attack killed Christina, then 37, in November 1988 in a Buenos Aires flat. He stopped short of suggesting, but managed to convey the impression, that foul play could have been involved.

The statement was the latest shot in a war of words between the foundation and Thierry Roussel, Christina's widower and the father of her child, 12-year-old Athena — sole heiress to the Onassis fortune. The foundation administers the inheritance but will have to relinquish control to Athena when she comes of age. It fears that her father could then manipulate his daughter and her money for his own purposes.

Months before her death, Christina had suspected Mr Roussel's motive and altered her will. Mr Papadimitriou said that she had told him: "If anything happens to me, Roussel will be the child's guardian. I don't want him. I'll keep him out of it." In a handwritten letter then to Mr Papadimitriou, copies of which were made public last year, Christina plainly suspects that Mr Roussel is eyeing the fortune. Shortly after the will was drawn up and put in a safe deposit box in Athens, Christina was dead.

The foundation has always doubted that the cause of her death was a heart attack or pulmonary oedema, as the coroner's report said. "Christina's heart was fine, and the doctors said so," Mr Papadimitriou was quoted as saying in *Ta Nea*. "It was stronger than that of a bull. Her death to me remains a mystery."

Earlier this month, Mr Roussel accused the foundation of employing Israeli agents to try to kidnap Athena. At first it issued a half-hearted denial. When an Israeli agent



Thierry Roussel, left, at the 1988 burial service on Skorpios for his former wife, and Christina Onassis in 1988 with daughter Athena, then three

was arrested in Italy, claiming to have been in the pay of a Greek interest, Mr Papadimitriou admitted employing Israelis, but only to keep watch on Mr Roussel's activities. The foundation insists that the Frenchman, portrayed in the Greek media as a spendthrift playboy, is out to get his

daughter's fortune for himself. Mr Roussel has levelled an almost identical allegation against the foundation.

In recent years, the foundation has awarded prestige prizes to world personalities for achievements in the arts and sciences. Ceremonies are held each spring in the mod-

ernist Megaron concert hall in Athens with great fanfare. Among recent recipients have been the late Lord Stockton, formerly Harold Macmillan, the Prime Minister, and Ted Turner, founder and chief executive of CNN.

In the past two years, however, the foundation has fo-

cused nationalist ire on Mr Roussel, whom it accuses of trying to "turn Athena away from her Greek roots". The Greek media have eagerly taken up the cry.

"The real battle won't begin until 2003", *Ta Nea* said, referring to when Athena turns 18.

With seven infants, the hospital bill alone could reach \$125 million (£780,000). Although the McCaugheys have medical insurance, it is not yet certain it will cover that sum. Their local church has set up a fund. Mrs McCaughey had been on a fertility drug. She was in the thirty-first week of her pregnancy.

Critical hours for the Iowa septuplets

FROM TINKU VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

DOCTORS who delivered the world's only living set of septuplets said yesterday that the babies' weight at birth and the time they spent in the womb indicated a very good prognosis for their survival.

Speaking of the septuplets, who were born on Wednesday to Bobbiand Kenneth McCaughey of Carlisle, Iowa, Dr Paula Mahone, who was at the birth, said: "The size of the babies is wonderful. Each weighs in a normal range for babies this age, which is virtually unheard of in a multiple pregnancy." The babies' condition is serious, which is normal after multiple births, but the next 48 hours hold the key to their survival.

The risks of medical complications are highest immediately after birth, with respiratory problems posing the greatest risk. The babies are receiving a preparation, known as a surfactant, to improve their lung function. Their bowels and livers are not yet sufficiently formed to deal with food.

With seven infants, the hospital bill alone could reach \$125 million (£780,000). Although the McCaugheys have medical insurance, it is not yet certain it will cover that sum. Their local church has set up a fund. Mrs McCaughey had been on a fertility drug. She was in the thirty-first week of her pregnancy.

Vatican hierarchy stunned by alleged affair of bishop, 75

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

A SENIOR Italian Roman Catholic bishop with strong links to the Vatican yesterday denied allegations that he had kept a mistress for the past 20 years. But *Oggi* magazine, which published the allegation, said it had "concrete proof", including tape recordings of "erotic telephone conversations" between Bishop Alberto Ablondi, 75, and his alleged lover, Laura Magrini, 53, who had admitted the affair.

The case has stunned the Roman Catholic hierarchy and caused shockwaves in the Church at a time when the Vatican is under growing pressure from liberals to ease its ban on married priests. The "Livorno scandal" is the closest the issue has come to the Pope and the Vatican. Mgr Ablondi, a bishop for 31 years, is second in command of the Italian Bishops' Conference, and has often been seen at the



Ablondi: denies having affair lasting 20 years

side of the Pope. Signora Magrini, a former married teacher with a 20-year-old daughter, said her "forbidden but all-consuming" affair with the bishop had begun in 1977, shortly after she separated from her husband. She was then 33, and the bishop was 55. She said she had approached the bishop's office to offer her help with subscrip-

tions to the diocesan magazine. When she met the bishop, they both experienced an "instant attraction. Like a bolt of lightning", Signora Magrini told *Oggi*.

She said the relationship remained platonic for several months, until at the beginning of 1978 "the unthinkable happened at the bishop's desk", and they embraced for the first time. She said she had been forced to speak out because otherwise the transcripts of their conversations would have been published.

Mgr Ablondi said in Livorno that Signora Magrini's version of events was "pure fantasy". The bishop said: "I know that woman very well, and I have already forgiven her. She liked to confide in me, but I kept a polite distance. I found some of her behaviour unhealthy."

Oggi insisted that it had checked and double-checked Signora Magrini's account of their assignments, and found that it was reliable.

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INTERNATIONAL

Arms team resumes hunt



Bryan Baxter, from Hitchin, Hertfordshire, one of more than 70 inspectors expelled from Iraq, waiting in Bahrain for news

THE assortment of civil servants, scientists, soldiers and former spies who work for the United Nations Special Commission on Iraq will today resume their hunt for President Saddam Hussein's suspected arsenal of weapons of mass destruction.

The commission, known as Unscorn, was established by the Security Council at the end of the Gulf War in 1991 in what one inspector describes as an attempt to "occupy Iraq by remote control" after the failure of allied forces to oust Saddam. Its inspectors are charged with ridding Iraq of all its chemical and biological weapons, as well as ballistic missiles with a range of more than 90 miles, then monitoring its factories, laboratories and military installations to ensure that Baghdad does not try to rebuild its stockpile.

The commission is regarded as the most effective organ of the UN and is one of the organisation's rare success stories. Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, last week praised it for having eliminated more Iraqi weapons than the entire allied bombing blitz during the Gulf War. Since then, the UN inspectorate has destroyed some 36,000 chemical bombs and artillery shells and 690 tonnes of chemical warfare agents, blown up a secret biological warfare plant in the Iraqi desert, and accounted for 817 of the 819 Scud missiles in Iraq.

Iraq has accused Unscorn of being a den of American spies. Although multicultural, the commission is dependent on American expertise and

**Inspectors who have
"occupied Iraq by
remote control" are
a rare UN success
James Bone writes**

intelligence. Unscorn uses an American U2 spy plane for surveillance missions over Iraq, sends samples taken from Iraqi weapons plants to US military laboratories for analysis and even receives aerial photographs from American spy satellites. The deputy chairman of Unscorn has always been an American and the United States provides more weapons experts than any other country.

Despite Baghdad's complaints, however, Russia and France have also made a crucial contribution. Unscorn's missile investigation has been run by a former KGB man, Nikita Smidovic, and a French lawyer named Annick Paul-Henriot played a key role in uncovering Iraq's biological programme.

Since the Gulf War, UN inspectors have intercepted Iraqi-bound missile parts in Jordan and fished sophisticated missile-guidance gyroscopes out of the Tigris. Officials told the Security Council this week that it had evidence that Iraq has continued a clandestine

effort to develop long-range missiles. Last spring a UN team led by Terry Taylor, a British inspector, found documents about Ricin, the lethal toxin used to kill the Bulgarian dissident Georgi Markov in London in 1978, in the university office of a scientist connected to Baghdad's biological warfare effort. The search is now focusing on Iraq's biological weaponry, its remaining stock of VX nerve gas, and its possible production of home-grown Scud missiles.

Inspectors say that four organisations — the Mukhabarat intelligence service, the Special Security Organisation, the Special Republican Guard, and the Office of the President — have developed a system of early warning and rapid reaction to UN searches. Some suspect that Iraq is moving its stockpile of anthrax around the country in refrigerated lorries to elude seizure.

At Russia's urging, the 21 commissioners who act as an advisory council for the Unscorn inspectors are due to meet in New York today to consider Iraq's complaints. The commissioners may decide that the inspectors should shift their emphasis in such areas as chemical weapons and ballistic missiles away from spot inspections towards long-term monitoring, which involved less confrontational visits to pre-identified sites. Any move to lessen the weapons inspectorate's power will be resisted, however, by Britain and the United States as well as by its Australian chairman, Richard Butler.



An Iraqi girl treads on the Stars and Stripes in a Baghdad protest yesterday

Dictator talks of victory as Arabs express relief

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

WITH an iron grip on Iraq's propaganda machine, President Saddam Hussein had little difficulty yesterday presenting his climbdown over weapons inspections as a major victory while the Arab world breathed a collective sigh of relief that a military showdown had been averted.

Many in the region saw it as the first time in a crisis that the Iraqi dictator, who has a record of making catastrophic miscalculations, had listened to reason and emerged with some gains. However, few doubted that it was just a matter of time before he provoked another confrontation.

The Iraqi media insisted it was a triumph for Saddam's "wisdom and diplomacy". But Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, confirmed British and American claims that no "specific commitments" had been made under a Russian proposal that defused the three-week standoff.

Moscow had, however, promised to work for a "just and fair diplomatic solution", he said. American weapons inspectors would be allowed to return because Iraq believed that Russia was sincere in its pledge to lobby for the lifting of sanctions, the state-run Iraqi news agency said. "The

Russians persuaded Saddam they could do nothing to help him unless he let the Americans back in. To listen to reason is a very big step given his track record," a Gulf Arab diplomat said. For its domestic audience, Iraq claimed it had won far more.

Whatever the details, diplomats said Saddam had lost little by provoking the United States and had gained some ground. Foremost, he thrust the sanctions issue on to the international agenda and won sympathy for Iraq among Arab countries increasingly frustrated by Washington's perceived pro-Israeli bias.

More tangibly, the Iraqi President has won Russian support for his position that sanctions should be lifted "without any additional conditions" if he comes clean on his weapons of mass destruction. Washington had insisted the oil embargo would remain while Saddam was in power. And he has bolstered relations with Russia by enabling Moscow to pull off a spectacular diplomatic coup.

The danger is that Saddam clearly expects more and could overplay his hand. "This is the first step toward lifting the sanctions," senior Iraqi parliamentarian said.

**“To listen to
reason is a
very big
step, given
Saddam's
track record”**

Jewish students shot in Jerusalem ambush

Jerusalem: Palestinian extremists shot dead one Jewish religious student and seriously wounded another in the winding alleys of Jerusalem's Old City early yesterday (Christopher Walker writes).

The ambush was a severe blow to faltering American efforts to revive the Middle East peace process. It led to an immediate Israeli decision to boost its security presence in the mainly Arab Muslim Quarter of the Old City and to build a permanent new police post there. Both victims — one aged 26 and the other 18 — were students at the Jewish seminary of Aharon Cohen, a right-wing group dedicated to settling Jews in the Muslim Quarter and other parts of mainly Arab east Jerusalem which the Palestinians claim as the eventual capital of a future Palestinian State. They were ambushed under cover of darkness as they walked without an armed guard from the seminary to their dormitory.

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United front forces Saddam to retreat

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR, JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK AND TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

AMERICAN and British might and Russian diplomacy finally forced Saddam Hussein to back down yesterday. Faced with a united front by the Security Council, the Iraqi leader agreed to allow all the United Nations weapons inspectors, including the Americans, to return to Iraq today.

However, world leaders called for continuing vigilance over Saddam after the mid-night agreement in Geneva by the five permanent members of the Security Council.

President Clinton said that the United States was resolute in its determination to prevent Iraq threatening its neighbours with nuclear, chemical or biological weapons. The Pentagon last night dispatched an expeditionary force of 32 warplanes, including F16 and F15 fighters, B1 long-range bombers and refuelling planes, to maintain military pressure on Saddam. Sandy Berger, the US National Security Adviser, said that he expected UN spy air-

craft to continue their flights over Iraq. Mr Clinton said that Saddam must comply unconditionally with the will of the international community. America would "wait and see whether he does in fact comply".

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, flew to Luxembourg after chairing the meet-

ing in the UN building involving Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, Yevgeni Primakov and Hubert Verdrine, the Russian and French Foreign Ministers, and a Chinese representative. Mr Cook called for continued international vigilance over weapons of mass destruction.

"Nobody is complacent. This is an issue which is going,

to be with us for a long time to come," Mr Cook said. He insisted that no deal had been struck with Saddam. "He has not won any compromise. There are no concessions. There is no deal. There is no commitment on the part of the United Nations permanent five to lift those sanctions."

Yesterday George Robert-

and that the inspectors would do their work unconditionally. The United States had not agreed to any conditions about banning UN spy flights or inspections of Saddam's palaces. Russia insisted that the agreement was "only a first step" in defusing the crisis, adding that it would lobby to end UN sanctions.

Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, said that it was time for a diplomatic solution. Speaking in Cairo on his return from Russia, he said that he made no deal and again called the inspection teams unbalanced.

At the heart of the agreement lie two important gains for Baghdad: a clear hint that the number of American weapons inspectors will be reduced; and an expansion of the UN oil-for-food plan so Iraq can buy a wider range of products.

A preliminary draft of a UN report on the oil sales says the \$1.32 billion raised for humanitarian supplies in the past six



Madeleine Albright and Robin Cook at a UN press conference yesterday after Geneva talks on the Iraq crisis

months was insufficient to buy food and medicine. "UN observers continue to report sporadic hostility expressed towards the UN as a result of the erratic arrival of foodstuffs as well as complaints about

the quality of some foodstuffs, the continuing shortage of medicines, education supplies and electricity," the report says. Rations fed many families for only two to three weeks a month. In water,

sanitation, electricity, agriculture and education, only 5 to 10 per cent of the immediate needs are being met.

The Security Council must decide by December 7 whether to increase the amount of oil

Iraq can sell. If Iraq is still blocking UN weapons inspections, the council is likely simply to roll over the current scheme in its existing form.

Leading article, page 21



Tehran deal to help with Libyan missile

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

IRAN is suspected of negotiating a secret deal to help Libya develop a ballistic missile with a range of more than 1,250 miles, posing a threat to Southern and Central Europe as well as North Africa.

After meetings between senior officials representing both countries' missile industries and defence ministries since the beginning of the summer, a memorandum of understanding is believed to have been signed which will significantly expand Iranian missile aid to Libya.

At present the Libyans have an arsenal of short-range and medium-range missiles and rockets powered by liquid or solid fuel, as well as Scud B, Scud C and SS21 missile systems. Western intelligence sources said Libya was already at an advanced stage in the production of a longer-

range missile, part of the al-Fatah project to develop a surface-to-surface ballistic weapon with a range of more than 600 miles by 2000.

The intelligence assessment is that Tehran would supply the Libyans with surface-to-surface missiles and technology. This would lead to a weapon with a range of more than 800 miles and a 1,650lb warhead in the first phase, and an advanced system with a range of more than 1,250 miles and a warhead of 2,200lb at a later stage.

It is believed the new agreement will also involve building a plant in Libya to make fuels and fuel components for ballistic missiles.

There are reports that Iranian instructors have also begun training courses in Libya on missile navigation and guidance.

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16 Westgate (Opp. to Market Square)</p> <p>NOTTINGHAM*
Upper Walk, The Victoria Centre (Opp. to Market Square)</p> <p>OXFORD*
2 King Edward Street (Opp. to High Street)</p> <p>PETERBOROUGH*
Newgate Centre (Opp. to Market Square)</p> <p>READING*
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Lancaster Arcade, Market Street (Opp. to Market Square)</p> |
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* Showrooms open Sundays

Raid on jail by Hutu extremists leaves 300 dead

By SAM KILEY, AFRICA CORRESPONDENT

MORE than 300 people were killed when about 1,500 Hutu extremists attacked a Rwandan jail in an attempt to free hundreds of prisoners awaiting trial on genocide charges.

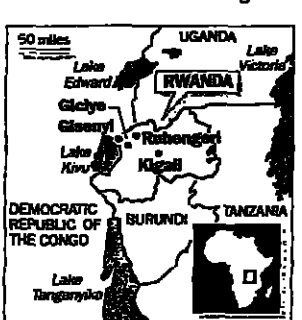
The dead at Gicye prison in the northwest of Rwanda included 200 Hutu attackers, 88 prisoners, and two soldiers. Fighting between the Rwandan Army and the Hutus continued into Wednesday night, the army said. Ninety-three prisoners escaped, and were being hunted yesterday by army scouts, who were also hoping to find the main camp used by the rebels.

The attack on Monday was the biggest operation carried out by the Hutu extremists, known as the *Interahamwe* ("those who kill together"), since most Hutu refugees returned to Rwanda two years ago. It was part of a well-honed strategy to finish off the Tutsis and retake control.

Documents abandoned by the *Interahamwe* fleeing Tutsi attacks on refugee camps inside the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo (then Zaire) showed that the Hutu extremist leadership had been planning to retake Rwanda from the Tutsis. They had also been plotting to free senior members of the inner circle of mass murderers from cells

where they are being held in Arusha, Tanzania, awaiting United Nations war crimes tribunals.

The Hutu generals and political leaders, who are now based in the Central African Republic, France, Belgium and Kenya, trained *Interahamwe* killers in infiltration and sabotage techniques, including bomb-making, communications and disguise.



Their campaign to make Rwanda ungovernable since their "refugee" camps were closed in November 1996 and 850,000 Hutus returned home has gathered momentum and driven most Tutsis from their smallholdings into camps guarded by soldiers against *Interahamwe* attacks.

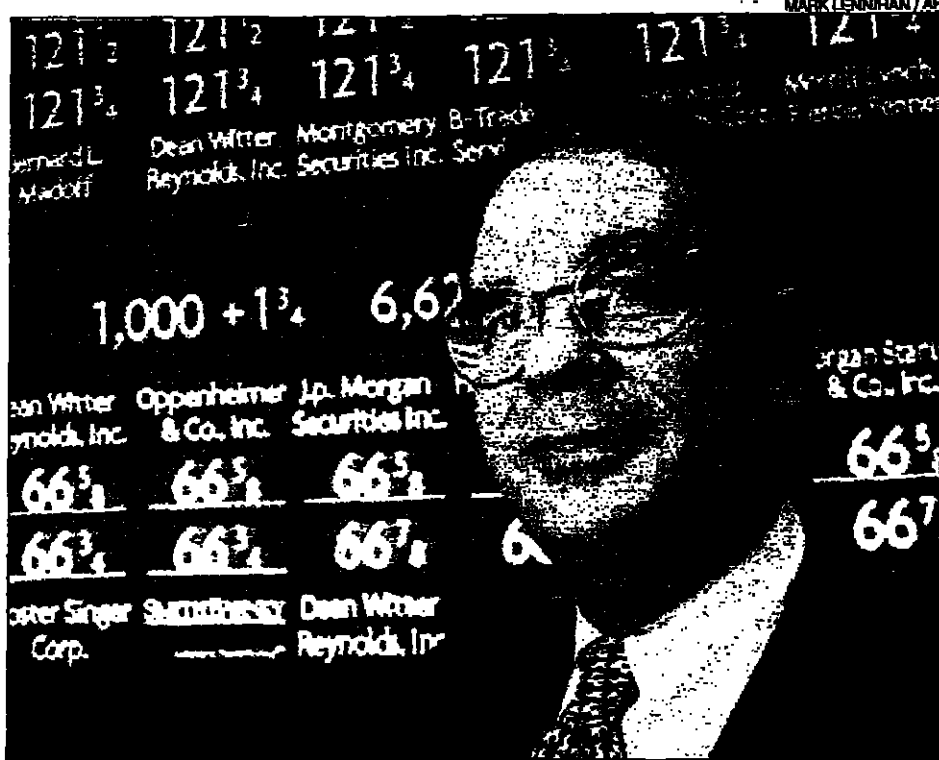
Most badly hit has been the northwest of Rwanda, where insurgents use the cover of

dense jungle to sneak into the country from secret camps in Congo. But the *Interahamwe* also relies heavily on the support of ordinary Hutus, who used machetes and clubs to slaughter their neighbours in the 1994 genocide.

The only real enemy of the *Interahamwe* in the mountains of Rwanda are passing patrols of government troops. The size of Monday's attack is a clear sign that the *Interahamwe* has gained ground and confidence.

Richard Sizibera, the Rwandan army spokesman, said: "The strategy is to complete the genocide. Who else is better placed to help the rebels than people accused of carrying out the genocide in the first place?" But the attack on the prison at Gicye has also exposed the weakness of the Rwandan Army in defence.

Born as a guerrilla movement when, as the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan Patriotic Front, it invaded Rwanda from Uganda in 1990, the Rwandan Army made a huge contribution to overthrowing Mobutu Sese Seko in Zaire. Back home, the former Patriotic Front guerrillas have had to defend fixed positions and have often found themselves the victims of bush fighting strategies they perfected.



Frankster Alfred Berkeley, now head of the Nasdaq stock market index in New York

Light shed on midnight cowboy

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

ONE OF the students who famously put a live Black Angus cow on the dome at the University of Virginia yesterday paid penance for a prank which has kept alumni at Thomas Jefferson's august establishment guessing for 32 years.

Alfred Berkeley III, president of the Nasdaq stock market index in Washington, finally admitted that he had placed the cow on the dome of the university's famous Rotunda on May 5, 1965, an act which became as celebrated among students as the achievements of the college



Scene of the crime

founder. Recent histories of the university have never failed to mention the spring morning when the 250lb heifer was discovered 50ft above the courtyard in Charlottesville, was dragged with valium and eventually descended via the building's spiral stair-

case. The prank turned sour when the cow died from the tranquilliser hours later. Hundreds of letters from animal rights activists arrived at the university president's office and George Bailey, the local Albemarle County sheriff, launched an investigation.

That inquiry came to a close after news of Mr Berkeley's exploits filtered through the alumni magazine yesterday. He had been goaded into presenting a mea culpa at an alumni dinner by one of four students who helped him to achieve the stunt.

"A classmate of mine came over to me at the dinner table and said, 'If you don't tell the story, I will,'" Mr Berkeley said. "I had no intention of owing up until he said that." Mr Berkeley is no longer proud of the escapade and, to ease his conscience, has paid \$1,755 (£1,096) to the former sheriff to cover the original costs of the investigation, a sum Mr Bailey has now donated to a local animal rescue squad.

The plot was hatched with the help of his four colleagues, one of whom was able to procure the cow from his father's farm. Another, the son of a locksmith, was prepared to break into the Rotunda.

"The plan was that we would get the cow up on top of the Rotunda and then we were going to leave it there," he said. "I wish I could say there was a higher moral purpose, but it was just a prank." Under the university honour code, neither stealing nor lying is permitted and Mr Berkeley said he would have admitted the act had he ever been asked before.

The Rotunda has often been a target for such capers — the Confederacy flag was flown from the roof to commemorate the Civil War in 1961 and the faces of Mickey Mouse and Spiro Agnew, the former vice-president, have appeared on the clock.

WORLD IN BRIEF

New inquiry into journalist's death

The Court of Appeal in Santiago has ordered a new police investigation into the death of a British journalist who was found hanging by his shirt in a hotel cupboard in the Chilean capital in March 1990 (Michael Evans writes). Jonathan Moyle, a former helicopter pilot who became a journalist, had been inquiring into the sale of 50 Bell helicopters and investigating allegations that Chile had obtained secret technology relating to a mine system.

A judge ruled in September 1991 that Mr Moyle, 28, had not committed suicide but had been murdered. However, he said there was insufficient evidence to identify the culprits and closed the case. The Foreign Office said yesterday that the Santiago court had now ordered the investigation after an appeal from a local lawyer acting for the journalist's family.

Somalia flooding spreads

Nairobi: Flooding in Somalia spread to the north yesterday and torrential rain continued to pound neighbouring Kenya, where President Moi declared three areas disaster zones. In eastern Ethiopia, unofficial reports put the number of dead at 295, with 65,000 people displaced, more than 4,000 houses destroyed and 12,000 animals drowned.

In southern Somalia, where many of the airstrips are under water, aid pilots were putting their light aircraft down on roads. The number of confirmed deaths in Somalia since the Juba River burst its banks on October 18 had risen to 1,277, but that figure did not include deaths in the north, nor the casualties in isolated villages. (AFP)

Proust lobbied for prize

Paris: A letter written by Marcel Proust, right, in 1919 and published this week reveals the French novelist broke a cardinal rule of literary competition by lobbying the head of the Académie Française in an attempt to secure its Grand Literature prize (Ben Macintyre writes). His *A l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs*, second volume of *A la recherche du temps perdu*, failed to win, but did take the year's equally distinguished Prix Goncourt.



Girl found shut in dog cage

Chilton, Wisconsin: An American girl aged seven was discovered shut in a wire dog cage in a cold, dark basement, when her 11-year-old brother, coatless and barefoot, went to a police station for help, authorities said. The girl's father, Michael Rogers, could be sentenced to up to 80 years in prison if convicted on eight charges of physical and mental abuse of the family's four children. Her mother, Angeline, faces up to 55 years on eight counts. Investigators found the girl in a 24in-by-17in wire cage. She was thin but otherwise healthy. She and her siblings are with relatives. (AP)

Assassination confirmed

Pavia: After 35 years of investigation into the death of Enrico Mattei, president of Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi, the Italian energy and gas group, judicial officials announced that he was killed when a bomb blew up his aircraft. The authorities had previously insisted that the plane had crashed. In August, press reports said investigators knew this to be false. In 1994, Tommaso Buscetta, a Mafia supergrass, said Mattei had been assassinated to protect US oil interests. (AFP)

Eta halts prison action

Bilbao: The Eta Basque guerrilla group announced that it had suspended all actions which it had planned to carry out on behalf of comrades in Spanish jails. It said that it was halting its "prison campaign", which has included hunger strikes and other forms of protest in jails. Leading Basque politicians said it was a signal that Eta would stop attacking prison officials. (Reuters)

Euthanasia pill promised

Darwin: Doctors in the United States, Canada and Australia are close to unveiling a simple, painless, do-it-yourself euthanasia pill that aims to bypass anti-suicide laws, said Dr Philip Nitschke, who came to international attention as the doctor who helped four people to die using the world's first euthanasia law in Australia. (AP)

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CULTURE



KISS SEX GOODBYE

It's time to go back in the closet, says Bryan Appleyard

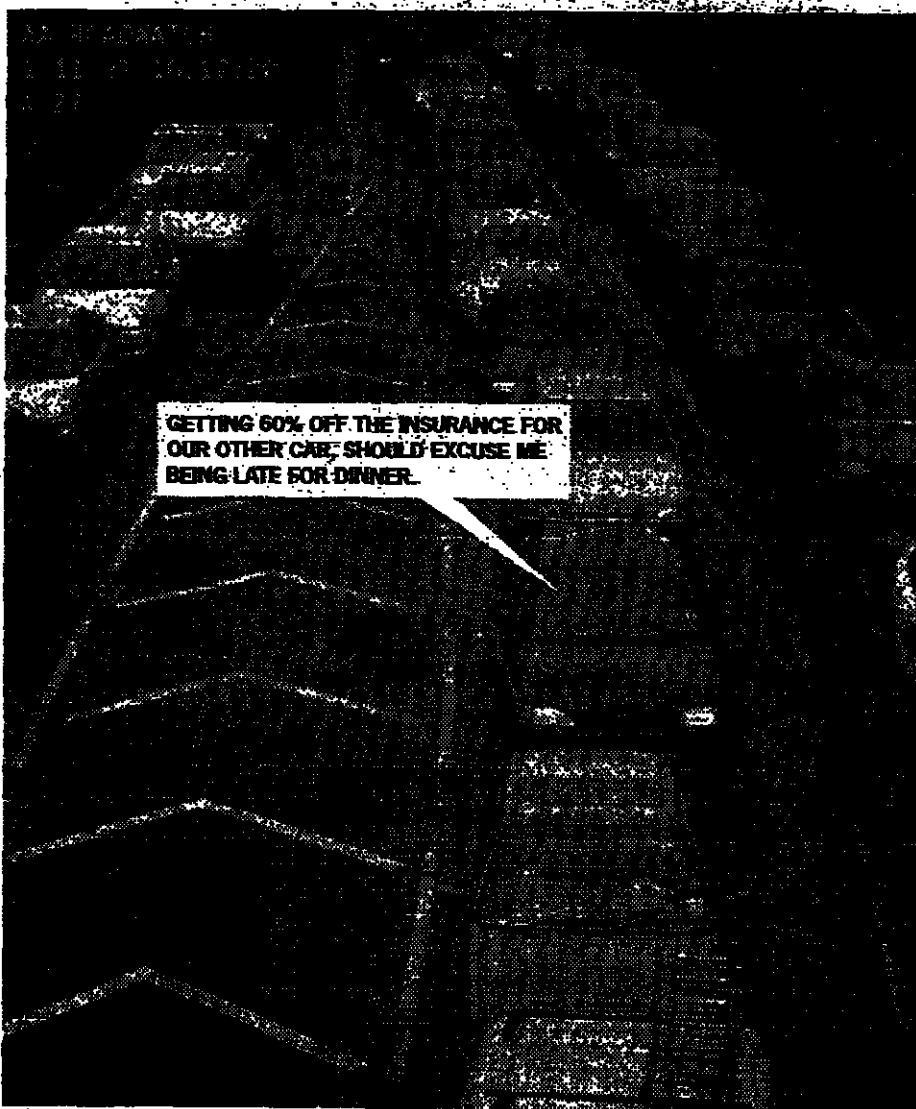
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Above left: Khaki hooded zip-up top, £69 by Calvin Klein Jeans. Bronze glitter T-shirt, £115 by Katherine Hamnett. Jeans both at Harvey Nichols. Cream cord A-line skirt, around £55 by APC, 124 Draycott Avenue, SW3. 0171-225 0364. Tan leather heels, £94.99 by Office, 57 Neal Street, WC2. 0181-838 4447. Cream fleece scarf, £30 by YMC at Browns Focus.

Above centre: Ice blue zip-up pocket cardigan, £159 by Joseph, 28 Sloane Street London SW1. 0171-590 6200. Grey-blue lace dress, £535 by Colette Dinnigan at Harvey Nichols. Grey patent heels, £135 by Patrick Cox, 8 Symons Street SW3. 0171-730 6504.

Above right: Cream fleece jumper, £75 by YMC. Grey zip-up hooded top with glove pockets, £180 by Final Home, both available at Browns Focus, 38-39 South Molton Street, London W1. 0171-629 0688. Khaki army pants, £35 by Warehouse, 19-21 Argyll Street W1. 0171-278 3491. Green, blue, burgundy striped cashmere scarf, £260 by Rebecca Moses at Harvey Nichols.

Opposite left: Grey and blue stripe fitted fleece top, £34.95 by Great Plains at John Lewis. 0171-399 7200. Grey trousers with pointed leg, £59.99 by Morgan, 393 Oxford Street W1. 0171-499 4101. Grey pinstripe athletic, £275 by Clements Ribeiro at Manolo Blahnik. 0171-352 8622. Gucci Diver watch, £495 at Gucci stores and selected department stores. 0171-371 7795.

Opposite right: Flecked olive fleece, £145 by DKNY. Brown hooded zip top, £465 by D for Donna Karan both from DKNY, 27 Old Bond Street W1. 0171-499 8089. Camel jersey flares, £129 by Martin Kibman at Liberty's Regent Street W1. 0171-734 1234. Gold and cream Adidas Campus trainers, £39.99 from Sole Trader. 0171-838 6777.

Photographer: ALEX SARINSON
Stylist: Deborah Brett
Hair: Nicola Clarke for Andrew Jose, London W1. 0171-323 4679
Make-up: Sarah Book
Model: Lydia M at Storm



*Price is for frames and Specsavers varifocal lenses. Special or glass lenses available at extra cost. **Exchange or refund available to your prescription on spectacles returned within 90 days of purchase. Replacement to value of initial purchase. Not available in conjunction with any other offer. Sports-lex discussed £139.95 with varifocal lenses.

Now you can believe your eyes

Ladder may lead police to Cartier robbers

BY STEWART TENDER AND PAUL WHITAKER

THE LADDER, a wooden structure used by the robbers in the Cartier heist, has been found by police. The ladder was found in a room above the Cartier store in London. The robbers had used the ladder to climb into the store and steal the Cartier jewelry. The ladder was found in a room above the store, and it is believed that the robbers used it to climb into the store and steal the jewelry. The ladder was found in a room above the store, and it is believed that the robbers used it to climb into the store and steal the jewelry.

Nouveau purple

ages best value

It is a new trend in fashion, and it is called 'nouveau purple'. It is a color that is not often seen in fashion, but it is becoming more popular. It is a color that is not often seen in fashion, but it is becoming more popular. It is a color that is not often seen in fashion, but it is becoming more popular.

taken on a new and sexier image. Style Editor Grace Bradberry looks at the best in luxury sportswear



Ever spent the day curled up on the sofa in a fleece and tracksuit bottoms, and thought that if only a day in the office could be this comfortable, you'd get a lot more done? The trouble with "feel-good" clothes — the sort of soft, fleecy, loose fitting things we all owned and loved as children — is that they just aren't smart. At best they are casual, at worst they are scruffy. Some of them won't even pass

muster in Sainsbury's. Expensively branded athletic gear will do — but how fraudulent one feels if the most exercise ever taken is the walk to the car. Likewise, the hardcore fleece. Should anyone with vertigo really step out of the door in a Patagonia top?

Now the Americans have come to our rescue. For some time now New York designers have been elevating jogging pants, sweat-shirts and fleeces from their comfy,

practical position as items of marginal fashion importance, into statements of chic and sexuality. Marc Jacobs, the original grunge designer, now firmly committed to *luxe*, produces what the Americans call "hoodies" in "cashmink", a thoroughly decadent mixture of cashmere and mink in which only the fabulously wealthy would dare to perspire. Donna Karan's casual tops are similarly priced to intimidate. Milan has followed the trend, and this season Miuccia Prada showed roomy hooded tops in her mainline and sweatshirt-style knits in Miu Miu, the diffusion line.

Entry to the comfort zone need not come at such an exorbitant price, however. Prada and Marc Jacobs might be the only sportswear that could possibly "work" in the office, but there are plenty of chic alternatives that will at least get you through the weekend. Saturday night included. And as a street uniform, the zipped top, whether fleecy, sweaty, or knitted, is unbeatable. For those who really do ski/paraglide/rock-climb, a heavy-duty fleece has an authentic style of its own. Polarone does one that is made from "Post Consumer Recycled Fleece" (PCRF), which is produced from recycled plastic bottles.

If the Pepsi Max adverts are not based on your lifestyle, however, then why pretend? The luxurious sportswear of Martin Kidman, a young British designer, is certainly not intended to climb every mountain, but it looks very good against the backdrop of a restaurant for Sunday brunch.

The ultimate street labels of the moment are YMC and Duffer, but the usual suspects have all produced their own variants. Jigsaw, French Connection and Agnes b all have fleecy bits and pieces.

A final word of warning. Sweating in these clothes is not only unfashionable, it is also expensive: many of them are "dry clean only".

'Should anyone step out in a Patagonia top?'



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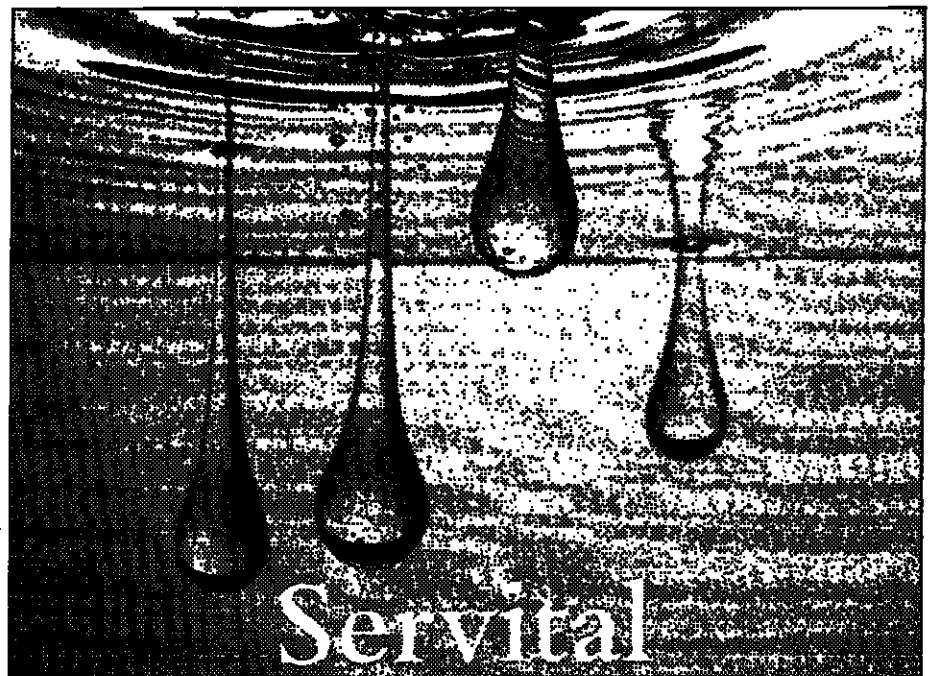
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Among my golden souvenirs

Peter Stothard follows the anniversary celebration trail

In this golden festival of informality the biggest problem for the lunchers at Guildhall was the polythene sheet in the middle of their menu. It was a foot long, nine inches wide, and sat underneath the cord between the food and drink list (baby lobster, Nutbourne Schoenberg 96, swede purée and Bas Armagnac) and the list of toasts and brass band music. What was it for?

To separate the still damp leaves of print, maybe, so that the French Beans were not smudged together with the Orchestra of the Scots Guards? To protect the City of London's guests from the rain that might otherwise soak them as they left? To be a cunning message of dissent from some packer in the City Corporation stores? Who could tell?

As the lunch went on, it became a little clearer what this new informality meant. There were no uniforms, except on the City's ceremonial corps of musket, drums and pipemen. There were no medals or morning suits, no entry by trumpets.

The Duke's speech was warm and personal, and the Queen gazed fondly at her husband as he stumbled a little while making it. We all hip, hip hoorayed, some of us a little uncertain of the words. And everyone left looking happier than when they arrived, the intellectual leaders amongst them clutching their menus in the clear plastic bags that had been deliberately provided, tucked helpfully under the golden cord, to keep their souvenirs clean. Soon, every guest, even those who had drunk fully of the Pomerol, could be seen with their gilt-embossed mementoes protected from mud and rain.

In the evening it was harder to tell what the audience made of the performance at the Royal Festival Hall. The offering on stage was a mixture of music and Shakespeare. The souvenir was plain blue card and cost £5. But this was not so much a variety show, varied though it surely was, as a distraction from the show that everyone really wanted to see: the comings and goings, smiles and frowns of the foreign royalty in the boxes at the back. In the corridors there was much disrespectful talk of the *Helio* brigade. But there was much more demand to see how kings and queens looked dressed and aged and presented their children when they were unlucky enough to live in countries other than ours.

The event did not appeal to *The Times* reviewer. But then he was actually watching what the performers were doing — one of very few to do so. For most of the audience even Ian Holm as Polonius and Felicity Lott as Desdemona were like characters on the television screen in the house next door. We heard more or less what was happening. But we were not too bothered with the finer points.

The man two rows in front of me offered a particularly fine brand of informality. He could have given a fair Royal Command performance himself — as a circus acrobat.

able to appreciate the London Philharmonic out of one eye while using the other for a grand tour of royal Danes and Bulgars.

At the end everyone hip, hip, hoorayed, this time with less business bashfulness and more showbiz pizzazz. Two events down for the Queen and the Duke: three to go.

Westminster Abbey next morning was in a welcoming spirit — as though those many who had been there only two months ago for the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, were keen to weigh that memory against the joy of a different day.

Sitting in Poets' Corner, a little closer to John Dryden than after Diana's death and a little farther from William Blake, I had almost exactly the same full view of the Prime Minister in his choir stall and the same fragmented, faintly disturbing view of crosses, candles, and everything else.

For the opening hymns all the pews around me seemed peopled by the tense, the neck-cracking and the expectant. The only thing informal was their dress. The singing was a choirmaster's horror of entranced and lines jumbled. Across the aisle was Lady Jane Fellowes, stoical and dry.

When the Free Church Moderator, Dr Kathleen Richardson, spoke of our gratitude for Diana's life, there was a visible shudder as though two halves of a bridge had finally met in the middle of a river. There was a dabbling of eyes by some and a dull murmur by others. For the rest of the service the congregation found a new gusto, a completeness of their year.

Even the dissonances seemed different now. In Poets' Corner our own singing barely improved: but we were close enough to hear the behind-the-scenes blessing by the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Queen and Duke while the choir sang to the Abbey as a whole from *II Corinthians* xii. "Thus may they abide in union with each other and the Lord," the singers sang. "May God, who has given you 50 years together, of His infinite mercy continue to bless you and your union," spoke the Archbishop in a low voice. This was a pleasing counterpoint which faded into the grandeur of Vaughan Williams's *Antiphon*, the deepest rumbling of drums and organ and the descent to the end of the morning.

For the Queen and Duke there were still a Prime Minister's lunch, at which the Queen had to put her informality into words, and a private ball at which she could behave as she liked. For this writer that was the Golden Wedding's finale. Outside the Abbey, after tramping over the stones of Henry James and D. H. Lawrence, the celebrants streamed into the House of Lords, back to the House of Lords, out into limousines and off for a shopping afternoon. As far away as Victoria Street little groups could be identified by the deep cream Orders of Service in their hands, souvenirs of the day in which the new order was endorsed. There were a few drops of rain but no plastic bags.



In love with llamas

Lesley and Imp are soft, docile and as happy in the Pennines as in the Andes

My llamas arrived on Sunday. Unaware that they are to form the subject of a *Times* column, Lesley and Imp are grazing peacefully in my field in Derbyshire as I write.

How do I know this? A daily telephone call from the flat here in London — "How are the llamas this morning?" — brings me the latest news. Both girls spent a peaceful night, moving of their own accord when it started to rain, from their chosen spot under the beech tree by the wall, to their shelter. They breakfasted at 9.30 on a little goat-mixture. Lesley consented for the first time to be stroked.

Forgive the enthusiasm of a new llama-keeper. This has been an ambition of mine ever since I encountered these most beguiling of creatures on visits to the Andes.

Nobody who has met a llama can have failed to be struck by something quite singular about these animals. Llamas are cute, of course: big, dark eyes, extravagant eyelashes; long, elegant neck; a soft and lustrous coat of many colours... the impression of a giant cuddly toy. Add to that an air of gentleness, and it is not hard to understand why travellers to South America bore their friends on return with rolls of film of llamas looking adoringly into the camera.

But there is something more. Like the horse, the llama seems to speak to you of thousands of years of close association with man. Other animals that we herd — sheep, cattle, deer — seem somehow exterior: rounded up and penned; fed, protected and watered; more or less tolerant of us, more (or less) obedient; they show little interest in their masters beyond fear, greed and an occasional irritation at being constrained. We sense that they would probably rather we were not there.

But a llama is pleased you are there. Though by nature timid, she will drop what she is doing when she sees a human being and pick her way towards you, walking (as Thornton Wilder observed) like a lady delicately descending an endless staircase. She will then stand, just out of reach, with an expression which can only be described as one of total fascination. She is wholly absorbed in what you are doing. If you are with other people, she will stand just outside the circle of your acquaintances, her ears curled upward and quivering like two velvet question marks, listening intently, waiting to be drawn in.

But she never quite speaks. One day I am sure she will. When she does, her language will probably be Quechua, the tongue of the Incas. The association between the llama (and her rather smaller and fluffier cousin, the alpaca) and the Indian tribes of the high plains of the Andes is an ancient one. A relation of the camel, the llama is a domesticated version of the smaller camelids which still roam the wild places of the Andean mountainscape: guanacos and vicuñas. These browner and more deer-like creatures are extremely shy and rather rare, but I have seen them at a distance, running across the semi-desert of southwest Bolivia.

My resolution to share my life in Derbyshire with a couple of their domesticated relatives was made at some 16,000ft in the Bolivian Andes last summer. We had walked up from the forest over two days and were some miles short of the ridge, in uninhabited country, when an Indian boy loomed out of the mist and asked if we had seen a white llama on our travels. We had not. He explained that he had come from the other side of the ridge to fetch his family's herd, which had spent a few weeks grazing here. He had managed to find 11 of their 12 llamas, but a white one was missing.

Bill (this was his name) decided to call off his search and accompany us, with his herd, over the ridge to his village about six hours' walk. He had no dog, but simply called. A herd of at least 40 llamas followed. To hurry them, Bill would throw a stone — not at them, but anywhere: the sound of a stone clattering on the rocks seemed to alert them to the imperative to move. As to where they were going, they seemed to be seized by a collective wish to accompany Bill.

But why 40 llamas, when Bill said he was taking 11? As we reached the ridge, the mystery was partly solved. "Now I will separate mine," he said, throwing a stone into the gap between one llama and another. Miraculously, 11 llamas formed a group, the remaining animals wandering back down the mountainside.

Those ones belong to the people in the valley on this side," he said. "They know." There was some sort of understanding between the boy and his herd. They knew, too. And on we went, his furry charges leaping over rocks and streams, grazing as they travelled.

This intelligence, this self-sufficiency, this combination of wildness with belonging, appealed to me. On returning to England I started to make inquiries.

I found that llamas and alpacas have been kept here for many decades, having originally been brought from Chile. They can stand far lower temperatures than Britain presents but, lacking water-resistant lanolin in their coats, must have shelter against wind and rain.

Otherwise they are easy to keep, grazing happily on poor grassland. Nor are they without their uses. The alpaca's wool is valuable, and the llama's, once the coarse guard-hairs have been removed, is also worth shearing and selling. Some farmers run a llama with their sheep at lambing time. South American camelids have an inborn hatred of foxes and dogs and will chase both away. But they are by nature placid, only spit when grievously vexed, and — though they very occasionally get cross with human beings and become a little rough — they are not an aggressive animal.

British llama-owners can contrive all kinds of excuses for their hobby. Though you cannot ride a llama, she will carry a child, if led. She will also carry golf clubs and, her feet being soft, leave the turf undamaged. You can even (if you must) prevail upon a llama to pull a small cart.

But this is rationalisation. Two reasons for keeping them here predominate. One is to breed them: the other is for fun.

I do plan eventually to bring some baby llamas ("crias") into the world, but — at the risk of being expelled from the British Camelid Owners & Breeders Association before I even join it — I venture the thought that breeding for profit when what con-

tributes to the value of the beast is scarcity and curiosity value may, like pyramid-selling, have a natural limit. Once Lesley and Imp are old enough, however, we plan to invite a boy llama for the weekend — the gestation taking about 11 months. Unusually for a four-legged beast, llamas mate in a semi-recumbent position. A camelid sits down as a sign of submission, not obstinacy, but this can be infuriating when what you want it to submit to is your wish that it should move.

Imp comes from a farm near Ashbourne in Derbyshire. Jane Methuen, who breeds llamas, had already named her when, with the friend who shares my house, I went to choose. It is my friend who will have to look after the llamas all week, but she loves animals and Mrs Methuen told her all about llama husbandry and offered to keep Imp together with any other llama we might buy, until they were friends and ready to move.

Two weeks later, in Staffordshire, we found another young female, with a brown, furrowed brow. Mrs Johnson, who keeps her own small herd, told me this llama had been born on April 1 this year. That being my father's birthday, I named her after him, altering Leslie to Lesley because she is a girl; and then — because she is a llama — to Lesley.

She departed Staffordshire for Ashbourne. The leave-taking from her mother was a touching affair. Llamas make no sound but for a sort of plaintive humming. Lesley and her mother stood together one last time, and hummed to each other. Then she left, to join her new friend.

Last Sunday, we helped Mrs Methuen coax both girls into a horsebox. An hour later they minced delicately down the ramp and into their new pasture, eyeing the shelter we have built for them, the hayrack, the stream-fed pond I dug last year, and the fences which put any yew trees out of reach. Mrs Methuen left, to a little hum from Imp.

That night I got up twice to see if they were all right. They lay quietly under the beech tree, their white patches bright in the misty moonlight. On Monday morning I took my leave.

I cannot say either hummed as I left. I do not expect they will hum when I return, this evening. But, internally, I am humming already in anticipation.

Matthew Parris

Justify our trust, Mr Blair

Labour must stay true to its aims, says John Lloyd

This new Labour Government was elected to do great things. It said it would do so while simultaneously proposing, as earnest of its distance not just from old Labour but also from former governments, that it would do a few focused, limited-but-important things. But where is ring-fencing its pledges. It vaulted its tasks.

It now finds itself assailed on both pledge and task front. This is indeed the end of honeymoon. Chill winds whisper of commissions of inquiry giving unwelcome reports, legislation bogged down, opposition revived, backbenchers roused and tetchy, lobby groups disaffected, the party in revolt, the people disillusioned.

The pledges included the improvement of education through a reduction in class sizes; the improvement of healthcare through the reduction of waiting lists; and the maintenance of a tight monetary framework. In this past week, all of these have produced blazes for the Government.

Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, was reduced to tetchiness when asked why, when the pledge was to shorten waiting lists, they were getting longer. He said he had inherited a lengthening trend from the Tories, which is a fair point. He said he had no way of stopping them growing in the short term — a point not stressed before the election.

Education, by contrast, was the site for some good news. Standards are up; schools are improving. The fly in the ointment is that the schools improving most are those Labour once most reviled — the city technology colleges and the grant-maintained schools. This seems to show that class sizes may not be as crucial to educational success as a concentration on standards and a certain amount of selection.

Monetary discipline claimed its latest target midweek in Harriet Harman, the Social Security Secretary, given a tough hour before her own backbenchers for her plan to cut lone parents' benefits by up to £11 a week. Like other big spenders, Ms Harman has to deliver cuts to the Chancellor; she has sought to shape her economics around Mr Brown's powerful belief that work is the deliverance for the underclasses, and that sticks as well as carrots must be used. This is a reasonable point of view; it does, however, mean the cutting of benefits for (mainly) young women stuck with a child or children and with few skills. Precisely the kind of people the Left speaks for.

None of these needs be a large issue. Mr Dobson may come up with a good plan; if not, continued growth may deliver him more money. Education under David Blunkett and Stephen Byers is a non-ideological department willing, indeed avid, to go with what works, including what the Tories made to work. The pledges may yet be delivered, given time and luck. New Labour claimed in Opposition that it was able — uniquely able — to tackle a range of issues which were beyond the usual tight limits of politics. It wanted to recast the tax, health and welfare systems in order to discriminate between those in real need and those in little or no need. It identified a group which it called the socially excluded (formerly the poor, then the underclass) and promised to make the alleviation of their exclusion the test of its commitment. It proposed itself as at once a more ethical, more activist and more open Government.

I has claimed a green mantle, and used precious prime ministerial time to warn of global warming and domestic gridlock. It has sketched in ideas for reinventing government to make it more efficient, more transparent and closer to the people. It has already begun to reconstruct the constitution of the country, opening a box from which demands for a programme even more radical than its own programme now begin to emerge.

These were some of the reasons — good and solid reasons — why Tony Blair won his high mandate. His remains a Government which has grasped some of the challenges of the modern world in a way that no other party in the country, and few others in the world, has. That is why trust remains so crucial, why — as Mr Ecclesstone and his £1 million Bernie slowly fade — new Labour has to reconstruct trust in itself. The changes it plans to put the country through are at least as dizzying as those initiated by Margaret Thatcher — more so, perhaps, since the world has speeded up since then.

We do not need to love him, as his popularity levels may have lulled Mr Blair into thinking that we did. But we have to think that he knows how to distinguish the large from the small, the strategy from the tactic, the country from the party's advantage. We did not, in general, love Mrs Thatcher, but few would not have trusted her to cleave to the direction in which she believed.

Mr Blair may soon have to face the crushing burden of deciding to order British troops into battle. He already confronts a stronger Opposition, a more roused parliamentary party and a more sceptical electorate. The hard pounding starts here.

The author is associate editor of the *New Statesman*

Bar none

THE chambers where Cherie Booth practises has asked its senior clerk to leave after 42 years' service and is advertising for a more economical alternative. Leslie Page, who joined 4-5 Gray's Inn Square when he was 15, has been instrumental in building up the commercial set into one of the most lucrative in the country. "It's like Manchester United telling Alex Ferguson 'thank you for getting us to the top of the league, now you are sacked,'" says a friend from Gray's Inn. Mr Page, now on a golfing holiday in Portugal, is expected to leave in time for Christmas.

A senior clerk is a powerful figure, deciding who gets which brief. In the BBC's *This Life*, the racy soap about lawyers, a similar role was filled by Jo, played by Damian Zuk. Clerks are paid a percentage of their colleagues' fees. Page certainly shared in the success of Ms Booth's chambers, with an income of up to £150,000 a year. But now the chambers, headed by Elizabeth Appleby, QC and Michael Beloff, QC, wants to replace him with a director on a fixed salary of £100,000. Perhaps Mr Page should exploit Ms Booth's expertise in employment law and hire her to fight his case.

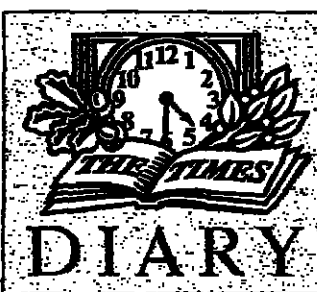


Legal types: Zuk and Booth

duced a continental sweeper system, a sure sign that new Labour is wearing the tracksuit. Their star striker is Tim Allan, Tony Blair's free-scoring press secretary. Their glamorous opponents this weekend? Oh, Daz Automatic.

Run out

TURF wars have broken out in William Hague's private office. Charles Hendry has been moved



from the post of chief of staff after growing weary of "overlapping responsibilities" with Sebastian Coe, the successful athlete and less winning MP. Coe had been Hendry's deputy but has now been promoted to run the leader's office.

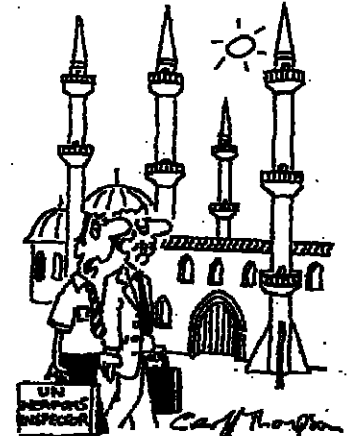
Hendry has been shunted off to become something called head of business liaison — a new post requiring him to "develop contacts with the business community". An onerous task, but Central Office denies a tiff. Naturally.

MORE news of politicians having unfortunate run-ins with ticket collectors. After Lembit Opik's embarrassment, I bring you an even more alarming tale involving the Shadow Chancellor. Peter Lilley was noticed at Westminster Tube station yesterday trying, without success, to pass through the bar-

riers. Luckily an inspector was able to point out that his ticket was invalid, and directed him gently to the excess fares desk.

Cooked up

HOW did Robin Cook become chairman of the Big Four's emergency midnight session to end the mother of all non-battles with Iraq? Answer: by seizing the initiative when protocol was no help. Madeleine Albright, Yevgeni Primakov, Hubert Vedrine, a Chinese envoy and Cook finally assembled.



"He can't have had time to hide them all..."

bleary-eyed, at gone two in the morning. Photographers clicked away but when they left there was an awkward silence. No one had officially called the meeting, so there was no host. "Well, shall I take the initiative and begin?" piped up Cook. "What a good idea," the gravel-voiced Russian replied. "And why don't you act as chairman and read out the final communiqué afterwards?" Watching Cook beaming, a nearby American growled: "Now that's what I call punching above your weight."

WHILE the royals stretched out in the front pews yesterday, Westminster Abbey's bellringers were having a hard time. After more than three hours, even the staunchest of them was wilting. "Afterwards they made straight for the Westminster Arms," says a sympathiser. "It was worse than VE-Day — they were flaked."

Tuna's off

DAYS of poulet noir and blanc de volaille are over in the House of Commons dining room. The five-course menu — popular with new Labour types — is to be scaled-down to three simpler courses: chicken soup, pie and chips, jam roly poly, the normal working man's stuff. Thanks go to Joe Ash-



Jonathan Aitken's daughter Victoria, 17, who is to come out at a Paris ball. She will not stay at the, er, Ritz.

ton, bluff Labour MP and a loud voice on the catering committee. "The old guys were playing hell that there was too much fettucine and penne and not enough steak-and-kidney pie and stew," says Ashton, weaned on tripe and onions. "There are so many women in the place, the menu had got like a Kensington wine bar. They think three lettuce leaves and a spoonful of tuna is a good lunch. We don't."

JASPER GERARD



WATCH HIS SPACE

Time will tell if Saddam has really backed down

The insomnia summit has produced an uncertain conclusion. Madeleine Albright and Robin Cook claimed victory in the stand-off with Iraq after their early morning meeting in Geneva yesterday. The Secretary of State declared that Iraq had "reversed course" under pressure from the United Nations community. The Foreign Secretary stated firmly that Saddam Hussein had "not won any compromise" and that "there are no concessions". If this is the outcome then Iraq has now backed down on weapons inspections merely in return for the promise that Russia would actively press its case on the UN Security Council.

Such a conclusion would be welcome. It would starkly demonstrate that Saddam has, not for the first time, misjudged his opponents and has been pressed into ignominious retreat in the face of military force. Yevgeni Primakov, Russian Foreign Minister, will have provided little more than diplomatic cover for Iraq's reassessment. It is too soon to be certain. The actions of the allies over the next few months will determine whether this is an important triumph for international order or a defeat that will have profound consequences later.

The composition of the UN inspection teams is central to this. Over the past few weeks it has been constantly noted that Iraq had no role in this matter. Madeleine Albright has insisted that the return of the UN inspectors (Unscow) was unconditional. The statement released after the summit, however, suggested that the UN should adopt measures that made their activities in Iraq "more effective". This is likely to mean that Unscow will be expanded and the proportion of American nationals will fall. The UN certainly needs far more inspectors in Iraq. But these must be real experts in the field. A larger number of relative amateurs would ultimately assist, not obstruct, Saddam's attempt to rebuild his arsenal. This is why Iraq wants a reduced American

presence. If that is achieved then Saddam, understandably, will be satisfied.

The same might be said of sanctions. The UN will soon reconsider the rules under which Iraq is allowed to make limited sales of oil in order to purchase essential food and medicines. American and British diplomats, somewhat disturbingly, chose to indicate that the terms of this trade might be slightly softened if Saddam would co-operate on inspections. Iraq should not have been offered incentives to fulfil its obligations. It will be soon become clear if this has been an implicit part of an improper bargain.

There is a more fundamental aspect still. The UN is slipping towards a position where the sole criterion for the retention or not of sanctions is Saddam's attitude to the inspection effort. That is to ignore the conventional threat that Iraq can still pose to its neighbours and the treatment of its own people, especially the Kurds. Saddam might decide to suspend and then quietly hide his biological, chemical and nuclear weapons programmes for a nine-month period. After that, the intense Unscow enterprise would end, trade patterns would return, and Iraq would soon resume business as usual.

That would be a disaster. The sheer scale of Iraq's illicit efforts has only recently become fully apparent. Unscow has already discovered more than 38,000 filled and empty chemical munitions and 690 tonnes of chemical weapons agent. There is more that must lie undetected. The Foreign Office estimated this week that, unimpeded, Iraq could deploy some chemical and biological arms within a few months. Such a country requires comprehensive, complete and continuing inspection. This should be the precondition before any process of "normalisation" is undertaken. If this is the result of the arrangement endorsed in Geneva yesterday then it is an excellent agreement. If not, then a much more substantial confrontation lies around the corner.

PRUSSIAN NOT BALKAN

Welfare reform will require a stronger lead

Provoking the Labour Left might be seen as part of the job description of any modernising Social Security minister. But in a Government determined not to make too many enemies Harriet Harman is acquiring more than her fair share. Ms Harman is right to risk the wrath of the party's traditionalist redistributive wing by standing firm on single parent allowances. New Labour's emphasis on work, not benefits, as the path out of poverty is a genuinely progressive stance for the Left. The unpopularity Ms Harman has earned with her party's traditionalists has not, however, been balanced by an accumulation of credit with the most advanced modernisers in Labour. Her prickly relationship with her deputy, the Minister for Welfare Reform, Frank Field, reflects a hostility on her part to some of the ethical arguments with which the most far-sighted social security thinkers are grappling.

Ms Harman's position is not helped by lingering suspicion, extending into the centre of the party, provoked by her decision to send her son to a selective school. That prejudice may be unfair, but it is underpinned by her colleagues' perception of her performance in the Commons and on the airwaves, which have not won new admirers. Reform of the welfare state is one of the Government's most cherished ambitions, but it is a task of technical, and moral, complexity which will require sensitive political salesmanship. Can it be entrusted to a minister whose position is less than assured?

Ms Harman has more on her side than some other members of the Cabinet, and her bravery under fire, not to mention her

loyalty to her leader, are commendable. Several of the difficulties she faces are, moreover, outside her grasp. For a Government keen on administrative control, the management of welfare reform seems more Balkan than Prussian. Mr Field is preparing his own proposals for the future of the welfare state; Martin Taylor, the chief executive of Barclays Bank, is conducting a review of the tax and benefits structure; Sir Peter Davies, chairman of the Prudential, is exploring Welfare to Work policies; a Social Exclusion Unit has been established in the Cabinet Office to reintegrate the underclass.

All these exercises are designed to maximise the opportunities for work open to those capable of grasping them. But, while there may be more than one way to skin the cat, the Government is in danger of taking so many tools to the task that it will be left with nothing more than a smile.

The uncertainty of direction which still marks government policy was all too obvious, in this week's consultation paper on stakeholder pensions. The combination of tensions within the Department of Social Security, the exposed political position of its Secretary of State and the policy traffic-jam in Whitehall, is in danger of imperilling the necessary reform. Mr Field's instincts and intellect, not least his understanding of the initiative-draining effect of dependency, should ensure that he stays in place. He needs, however, both the public support of Downing Street in his role as architect and a departmental boss with the guile to present his design attractively as well as the surplus political capital to expend defending it.

LIGHT RELIEF

From Regent Street to Blackpool, the great British taste

In these dank November days, spirits are traditionally lifted by the glitter of Christmas lights, brightening the commercial glow of London's busiest shopping streets and twinkling merrily along the promenades of many a town where civic pride has boosted the Christmas budget. As postwar prosperity fuelled ever larger shopping sprees, the traders' lights themselves became the stars drawing wondrous crowds to the West End. Year after year, angels blew their trumpets across Oxford Street, imaginary beasts fought duels along Regent Street, crowns, orbs, and elves clashed in illuminated cacophony above the busy thoroughfare.

In recent years, however, lights as well as invention have dimmed. Funds are fewer, the boutiques' tills ring just as merrily without lanterns or snowflakes and today's jaded crowds have seen bigger and better at Las Vegas. Enter, then, the good fairy of advertising to restore élan. Yves Saint Laurent promised the haughtiest of haute couture, with his name up in lights and his logo dangling the length of Regent Street. But although British Airways, National Power, American Express and even Disney have blazoned their corporate goodwill down Regent Street's graceful curve, this was a Parisian coup that stuck even in greedy commercial gutters. The lights were too bright, the advertising too blatant, the entire idea too tacky, Westminster Council's arbiters of taste decided. The YSL Christmas has gone out of fashion.

The debate has illuminated a real problem. For most Londoners, the concept of a static luminous display is passé. Lasers, computers and inter-active technology can now summon Santa and his chariot of gifts at the press of a control button or the activation of a trembling child's voice. At nearby Waterloo station, Channel 4's display of such "Xmas" wizardry in its interactive posters has shown up how tired and stale have become the capital's official decorations.

Some claim it is a matter of different national taste. Scandinavia enchants its Christmas visitors with little candles in every window. New York's Park Avenue is festooned with a cloud of tiny white lights, and Mediterranean capitals have festive touches that are neither vulgar nor kitsch.

But Britain has the taste too. The illuminations at Blackpool are a sure mark of the British spirit. Thousands and thousands of lights stretch in never-ending line, fluttering and dancing in the seaside breeze. And what Blackpool offers for weeks on end, other cities also attempt at Christmas with gaudy self-confidence.

Let householders, too, join in. Lights, trees, plastic sleighs and beer-bellied Santas intoning pre-taped "Ho, ho, ho" are the stuff of the American suburbs. Could they not also find a home in England's winter land? Next week ten leading architects are to start a campaign to end the great British garish Christmas. What else will brighten November days?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Central threat to coastal safety

From Commander Timothy Fetherston-Dilke

Sir, You report today the announcement in the House of Commons of a reduction in the number of coastguard rescue sub-centres, four to be closed in the North of England and in Scotland and two of the busiest to be amalgamated on the South Coast. This follows the closure in the last few years of sub-centres at Ramsey, Isle of Man, Hartland in Devon, Tees in Yorkshire, and Peterhead in Scotland — all attributed to the advance of technology, not cost-cutting.

Advances in communication technology have indeed improved co-ordination of search and rescue operations around our coasts, and one can reasonably foresee an Atlantic shipping casualty being efficiently handled, even from a basement in Birmingham. To suggest, however, that a holidaymaker who falls down a cliff in West Wales or a yachtsman who capsize off Cape Wrath can obtain adequate assistance from Birmingham would be laughable.

I mention Birmingham because that was a location once postulated during the workings of a 1975 review of HM Coastguard, a suggestion which happily was not pursued. It is to my lasting regret that some 20 years ago, when I was assisting the review team, I did not insist that all its members spent at least 24 hours in the North Sea in an inflated life raft, with out-of-date flares and no radio, waiting to be rescued.

What must now be learnt by those who make such major decisions is that local knowledge can play a crucial part in the success or failure of a rescue operation, and that that cannot, with the best will in the world, be acquired by those working in a far distant rescue centre.

Yours faithfully,
TIMOTHY FETHERSTON-DILKE
(Chief Coastguard,
HM Coastguard, 1978-86),
85 Christchurch Road,
Winchester, Hampshire,
November 18.

New homes 'damage' to countryside

From Councillor Mark Dunn

Sir, It is very disappointing to see that the Planning Minister, Richard Caborn, does not intend to seek to change the direction of Whitehall's attitudes towards development on farmland and in the green belt (report, November 13).

In local government — I am both a district and a county councillor — we are instructed by central government that there will be an increase in the need for homes, resulting from the swelling numbers of single people who must be individually housed. This shortage of homes is reflected in Whitehall setting county-by-county targets for deadlines for new house-building.

In turn, these figures are used by well funded speculative housebuilders and harassed local officials striving to meet local plan timing disciplines to arm-twist local councillors into sanctioning the redefinition of countryside areas as suitable for very profitable greenfield housing development when, in fact, they would much rather that new home-building schemes took place on brown land, within existing urban envelopes.

It is a widely held view that local authorities are inadequate guardians of the countryside. But the fact is that almost all developmental damage to the green belts has been the responsibility of remote central government, which uses the planning inspectorate, with its precedent-driven philosophies and its reliance on Whitehall-drafted guidance notes, to bulldoze through development schemes which have been rejected by locally elected planning committees.

If all development profits on greenfield sites were heavily taxed, and if recovery of nearby brown sites were to attract a reciprocal subsidy I believe that there would quickly be a welcome and fundamental reversal of this almost universally unpopular practice of building new houses in the countryside.

Yours faithfully,
MARK DUNN,
Wildham,
Stoughton, Chichester, West Sussex,
November 13.

what the countryside is calling for.

Whatever the arguments about the figure of 4.4 million more households needed by 2016, clearly more houses will be needed in the countryside; but we are disappointed that — under this Government just as under the last — only 50 per cent of new households will be located in previously developed land.

Even to achieve that target the Government will have to take positive steps to give greater encouragement and certainty to developers to build on "brownfield" sites and avoid the grafting of inappropriate housing development onto small towns and villages.

The problem seen by the broader rural constituency — the people who live and work in the countryside, the rural businesses, the rural communities who need jobs, transport and indeed, housing — is the upward movement of house prices in villages with overnight village envelopes and in towns with rigid green belts.

Such planning policies stifle investment and employment, both because sites for new or growing businesses are not made available and because the lack of a mix of housing means that the skilled employees needed have nowhere suitable to live.

Yours faithfully,
IAN MACNICOL,
President,
Country Landowners Association,
16 Belgrave Square, SW1,
November 13.

From Mr J. I. Swallow

Sir, A simple equation: if the Government admits that half of our necessary residential development can be accommodated within existing urban areas then it should also admit that just by doubling the height of these schemes our cities could swallow 100 per cent. Recent Docklands developments have proved that medium-rise solutions in appropriate urban landscapes can look great, be profitable, aid regeneration and use small spaces efficiently.

London is huge, but its population is not. Our great cities already extend as far as they need to; the problem is that they are not being properly utilised. Nobody would welcome high-rise development in our suburban landscapes; but taller buildings in appropriate parts of city centres can revitalise under-populated areas, answer the housing shortage and still give developers the profits they seek.

Yours faithfully,
JEREMY SWALLOW,
26 Hotham Close,
Swanley Village, Kent,
November 13.

Tobacco sponsorship

From Mr David H. Walton

Sir, The Formula One people say that if cigarette advertising were banned the entire industry would move to the Far East (letters, November 19, etc), losing a large number of engineering jobs in this country. Frankly I doubt it, and the evidence is from the Indianapolis 500 race. That race has no bearing on the UK other than the fact that almost every car taking part in that and the rest of the series is made here, because we make the finest racing cars. If Formula One racing were to move away the entrants and drivers would still insist on the best cars and they would continue to come to the UK.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID H. WALTON,
10 St Guthlac's Close, Crowland,
Peterborough, Cambridgeshire,
November 17.

From Mr Brian Lightman

Sir, The fact that Tony Blair has the integrity to admit to a mistake when he, like all human beings, makes one, demonstrates the massive culture change that has taken place since May 1. Your commentators today obviously have far more difficulty understanding this than the electorate.

BRIAN LIGHTMAN,
30 Heol St Denys, Llysane, Cardiff.
lightman@classic.msn.com
November 17.

From the President of the Country Landowners Association

Sir, Those who reject all new housing in the green belt and on farmland are condemning our rural areas to a dire fate. House prices will spiral out of the reach of local communities, dormitory towns will flourish, shops, services and local jobs will inexorably disappear, and the rural environment will thus be impoverished. That is not

Bevin Girls

From Mrs Mary Beazley

Sir, I read your report about Bevin Girls (November 12) with great interest. There were also "Bevin Girls", and I was one of them, who fell into the same age group and who were not allowed to join the services, the Land Army or the Nursing Services. We were sent into the wartime factories which supplied the services.

I applied to join the WRNS — my father being in the Royal Navy — as soon as I was eligible to volunteer but learnt at the recruitment office that I was a Bevin Girl and must go into a factory. It was a slight relief to discover that in applying early before the point of conscription, one could

"choose one's factory". I opted for making parachutes in London and worked at a bench until the end of the war.

Despite the long hours on one's feet, the monotony of the work and the bombing I am glad that I experienced it. I was the only Bevin Girl in a large factory of several hundred women and therefore considered rather a freak. Another minor disadvantage was that — not wearing a uniform — one attracted unkind comment in the streets for not "serving one's country", which was hard to bear.

Yours faithfully,
MARY BEAZLEY,
Glebe House, Church Lane,
Wormley, Hertfordshire,
November 13.

Sandwich beef

From Mr Christopher Hadden

Sir, Much of the packaging used for consumer goods seems designed for the convenience of the packaging industry rather than the consumer. I find the ubiquitous triangular, clear-plastic packaging used for sandwiches at takeaway outlets a particularly poor example.

The opening part of the package is across the business end of the sandwiches and they are often packed too tightly to allow the removal of the first sandwich without dismantling it. Surely the industry could come up with a better design.

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER HADDEN,
6 Cumberland Court,
Cumberland Street, SW1,
November 18.

All crazy now

From Mr Louis Schaffer

Sir, Mr E. M. Holt (letter, November 20), in contrasting the NHS waiting lists with the time involved in the veterinary treatment of a tortoise, inquires whether we are living in a sane country.

You report (November 19) ministers and "officials", the whole of whose salaries are paid by the taxpayer, denigrating lawyers opposed to the abolition of legal aid for most civil cases as being motivated by the loss of a subsidy funded by the taxpayer and, in the same issue, the appointment by the Government of a self-confessed former cannabis user at a salary of £45,000 as deputy "drug czar", approved by Home Secretary, Health Minister and Leader of the House.

The answer, Mr Holt, is no.

Yours faithfully,
LOUIS SCHAFFER,
10 King's Bench Walk, Temple, EC4,
November 20.

Trolley tunes

From Mr Martyn Dyer

Sir, If the discovery by the psychologists of Leicester University that music influences customer choice turns out to be correct (leading article, "Musical wine bars", November 13) there is a veritable goldmine ahead for the supermarket which plays the right tunes.

I suggest the signature tune of the old BBC Dance Orchestra directed by Henry Hall: *Here's to the New Time* should be included in all selections, thus ensuring repeat purchases irrespective of the particular merchandise being targeted.

Yours faithfully,
MARTYN DYER,
Burn House,
Askridge, North Yorkshire,
November 13.

Natural gas

From Mr A. R. F. Carter

Sir, You report (November 14) that henceforth ministerial cars will be powered by natural gas, saving about 20p on a litre of petrol.

We may be sure that if a substantial proportion of private motorists were to follow this environmentally friendly example this Government, indeed any government, would soon impose an excise duty on gas fuel at least that amount.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD CARTER,
32 The Poles,
Upchurch, Sittingbourne, Kent.
rcarter4@compuserve.com
November 14.

Faith, reason and God's compassion

From Mr Struan Helliwell

Sir, Mr Richard Lambert (letter, November 18) might just as easily have written: "I know I'm being irrational but I still believe in God." It is simply not good enough to take God away from the realm of human reason and experience, and it is a misunderstanding of science to suggest that it involves anything more than giving the most probable explanation to any particular question. There is no distinction between good religion and good science.

If God really is incomprehensible to human reason and outside our experience — our science — what possible use can He be to us? If benevolence is in question, then what is the point in having a God?

If, on the other hand, God is active in human history and our present lives, it is surely our duty to use every tool at our disposal to attempt to understand Him and His ways.

It may be true to say that mainstream Christianity has always seen science and religion as complementary, but only to a point. When reason shows certain aspects of religion to be false, it is conveniently ditched by religious leaders, in favour of pre-philosophical conviction and irrational superstition.

Science may have its limitations, but it is all we have if we seriously seek an understanding of our place in the Universe.

Yours faithfully,
STRUAN HELLIWELL,
145C Station Road,
Hampton, Middlesex.
struan@clara.net
November 18.

From Mr Kevin Sealy

Sir, In the light of today's news involving the massacre of innocent people by religious fanatics, I am not convinced that the "hard evidence" on offer supports Mr John Sherlock's hypothesis (letter, November 18) that there is a God "who cares compassionately for human beings and humanity".

Mr Sherlock's faith may not be in doubt, but his judgment surely is.

Yours sincerely,
KEVIN SEALY,
18 Phoenix Close,
West Wickham, Kent.
100067.67@compuserve.com
November 18.

Jewish identity

From Rabbi Tony Bayfield,
Chief Executive of the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain

Sir, It is not only in the US (report, "US Jews attack Israel identity Bill", November 18) that Reform Jews are determined to establish their rights to recognition as regards status in Israel. Here, too, Reform, Liberal and Masorti synagogue movements, now claiming more than one in four of all synagogue-affiliated Jews, will not stand by and see their brothers and sisters in Israel disenfranchised.

Last week during Prime Minister Netanyahu's visit I represented my movement at the meeting he held with community leaders. This subject exercised the gathering to the extent that a former orthodox Chief Rabbi, Lord Jakobovits, was moved to make a plea for separation of religious and political powers in Israel.

At a subsequent meeting Yaacov Neeman, Cabinet minister overseeing discussions on this crucial subject assured us of a successful outcome. I emphasised to him that the issue was no less important to British Reform Jews than to those in America. We shall campaign, our dedication to Israel unwavering in its jubilee year, with the utmost vigour to resist any new attempts to make our fellow Reform Jews less than first-class citizens in the Family of Israel.

Yours faithfully,
TONY BAYFIELD,
Chief Executive,
Reform Synagogues of Great Britain,
The Sternberg Centre,
80 East End Road, N3,
November 18.

Thought for food

From Mrs Meg Kingston

Sir, Three businessmen spent £13,091 on dinner (report, November 18). One bottle of their five chosen wines was a red burgundy at £4,950.

Beneath this report was an appeal for help for cold and hungry children in Bulgarian orphanages. I calculate that if these *bons viveurs* had forgone the burgundy they could have provided emergency food packs for over 3,500 children for a week.

Yours faithfully,
MEG KINGSTON,
Laundry Cottage,
36 Fore Street, Evershot, Dorset,
November 18.

Pedal power

From Mr Philip Tooke

Sir, You report today that Queen Beatrix of The Netherlands "never wears a crown and rides a bicycle". May I applaud this cautious approach to travel.

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP TOOKE,
3 Lulworth Garth,
Leeds, West Yorkshire,
November 20.

OBITUARIES

JOYCE WETHERED

Joyce Wethered (Lady Heathcoat Amory), golfer, died on November 18 aged 96. She was born on November 17, 1901.



Joyce Wethered was the most stylish and successful woman golfer of her day, and is still widely regarded as the best in the world. She won the English Ladies' Championship in 1920 when she was not quite 19, she held the title for five consecutive years, playing 33 matches without defeat. She went on to be four times winner of the British Ladies' Open, in 1922, 1924, 1925 and 1929. She also played several important international matches, captaining the British team in three competitions, and she won the mixed foursomes at Worpleston eight times in fifteen years, with seven different partners. Bobby Jones, the great American golfer, after playing her at St Andrews in 1931, said he doubted whether there had ever been a better player, man or woman.

Joyce Wethered was born at Brook near Godalming in Surrey and educated privately there, being considered too frail for school. It was on childhood holidays that she first experienced golf. At Bude in Cornwall there were games on a windswept headland, and at Dornoch in the Highlands, where the family took a house overlooking the links, there were highly competitive contests with her brother Roger, captain of the Oxford team as an undergraduate and himself prominent in the British game as a gifted amateur for a decade after the First World War.

Apart from a single golf lesson from Tom Lyle, the professional at Bude, Wethered learnt her golf mainly by imitation, talking to her brother and his friends about technique, and watching and studying such great players as Harry Vardon, John H. Taylor and James. She had perfect balance, and a seemingly effortless swing, economical yet full of power. She was a perfectionist, and an outstanding stylist, with sound judgment and a full range of accurate, elegant shots.

Her temperament was perhaps her greatest strength. Calm and purposeful in competition, she liked to say that she aimed always to play the course, not her opponent. Her concentration was famous. A railway line runs alongside the course at Sheringham in Norfolk, and the story was often told of how, having brought off a crucial putt as a train rattled past the 17th, she was asked whether she had not been distracted by the noise. "What train?" was her response.

It was at Sheringham that she began her long run of championship form in 1920. Hers was an improbable and unexpected national debut. Still five

months short of her 19th birthday, and playing no higher than number 6 in the Surrey county team, she travelled to Norfolk for that year's English Ladies' Golf Championship only because a Surrey team-mate, Molly Griffith, persuaded her to come along. Despite being on the point of coming down with whooping cough, she played through to reach the final, where she won a remarkable victory over the redoubtable Cecil Leitch, then the dominant figure in women's golf. "It was throughout a match full of dramatic incident," *The Times* observed.

The most dramatic thing about it was that Leitch should have been defeated at all, let alone by a young unknown. She had not been beaten in a ladies' match on level terms since 1913. Wethered's surprise victory marked the start of an exciting and absorbing rivalry, keenly followed by the public. The two women's styles were very different, with the powerful Leitch appearing almost flamboyant by comparison with the graceful young woman.

Wethered, who was to retain the English Ladies' Golf Championship for the next four years, met Leitch twice in 1921. On both occasions — at Turnberry in the final of the British Ladies' Open Amateur Championship, which Leitch had held since 1914, and in the final of the French Open at Fontainebleau — the older woman had the upper hand. In the British Ladies' of 1922, however, Wethered triumphed

once more, impressing spectators at Sandwich (and rattling Leitch) with her inspired strokes and extraordinary coolness under pressure. "A new golfing queen has arisen," one newspaper headline proclaimed. Wethered won the Ladies' Open again in 1922, 1924 (when she knocked out Leitch in the fifth round), and 1925 (when she beat her in a gripping and hard-fought final). After the last of these wins she retired from competition, but was persuaded back to contest the Ladies' Open once more, on the Old Course at St Andrews in 1929. There she met another formidable opponent, the American champion Glenna Collett, and came back from five down after 11 holes to prevail in a memorable final.

She retired from competition once more, but captained the British women's team in the first Curtis Cup in 1929, against France in 1931, and against America in 1932. In 1933 she took a job as a golf adviser in the sports department of Fortnum and Mason. In 1935 she was paid £4,000 for a tour of America, in which she played more than 50 exhibition matches and advertised equipment. She was not entirely happy with her new-found professional status, however, and was eventually reinstated as an amateur in 1946.

By then she was married to Sir John Heathcoat Amory, 3rd Bt, a noted Devon sportsman, and proprietor of a long-established family business making lace. An earlier engagement to the Scottish golfer Major Cecil Hutchinson had been broken off. Golf was no longer such an important part of her life after her marriage in 1937, though in 1948 she and her husband reached the final of the Worpleston mixed foursomes, a competition which she had done much to promote since 1921 and which she had won eight times before her marriage, despite being hampered by the occasional hopeless partner.

She and her husband lived at Knightsbridge House, near Tiverton, an elaborate and eccentric Victorian Gothic edifice, where they built up a fine collection of pictures and a celebrated garden. Lady Heathcoat Amory was awarded the Royal Horticultural Society's Victoria Medal of Honour.

She continued to live at Knightsbridge after her husband's death in 1972, when the house passed into the custody of the National Trust and the best of the pictures, including works by Landseer, Poussin and Mengs, were donated to museums. She retained her interest in golf, having become the first president of the English Ladies' Golf Association in 1951. She had no children.

WILFRED JOSEPHS

Wilfred Josephs, composer, died on November 18 aged 70. He was born on July 24, 1927.



UNUSUALLY for a composer, especially for one with so busy a professional life, Wilfred Josephs claimed that his principal recreation was "writing music". The long list of his works, in many different forms, suggests that composition came easily and agreeably to him, but the high degree of craftsmanship that went into his music was of an order not lightly won nor casually exercised.

The craftsmanship, together with his versatility and a capacity for making a ready appeal to wide audiences, suggest that he might have been more at home in an age with a more settled musical language — perhaps in the 18th century as a Telemann or a Pergolesi. Yet he formed his own attractive, post-Romantic vernacular, finding his idiom not primarily through the study of his English seniors, and used it to great effect in light music and music for television as well as in his more ambitious works.

Born in Newcastle, Josephs first studied dentistry, qualifying as BDS from Durham University and practising as a dental officer during his army service in 1951-53. However, a growing interest in music led him eventually to abandon ideas of a dental career. He won a scholarship to the Guildhall School of Music in 1954. From study here with Alfred Newman he went to Paris on a Leverhulme Scholarship to study with Max Deutsch in 1958-59. Prizes, commissions and — perhaps surprisingly — came his way, but his international fame really dates from 1963, when his Requiem won the first La Scala and City of Milan Competition and received its premiere there under Carlo Maria Giulini.

Written in memory of the Jewish dead in the war, the Requiem draws on the Hebrew Kaddish Prayer for the Dead, and is essentially a meditation in ten movements, nine of them slow, with reflective sections for string quintet and orchestra alone between the solo and choral passages.

The work made a great and immediate impression, and confirmed Josephs as a composer with the ability to write seriously in a style that had immediate appeal. It also suggested that his essential musical nature was Romantic, although this by no means excluded a sharp wit, as was shown by the many light pieces and dance arrangements that went with his more ambitious concertos, overtures, instrumental sonatas and 12 symphonies. Consistent in all his music is a freshness of invention, a clear sense of structure and an excellent ear for instrumental sound.

With his strongly lyrical manner, Josephs was drawn to opera. *The Nottingham Captain* (1962) had a text by Arnold Wesker, and other works included a successful children's musical, *The King of the Coast*, followed in 1978 and 1983 by two more children's operas for the Harrogate Festival based on Lewis Carroll's *Alice* books. These gave children readily accessible music to sing without making any artistic compromises. However, his greatest operatic success came with *Rebecca* for Opera North in 1983. Daphne du Maurier's story well suited his sense of atmosphere, his mastery of orchestral expression and his skill in writing strong, singable melodies, even if much of the score seems to illustrate the plot rather than to lead it dramatically. The work received an ovation at its Leeds premiere, and was sold out for the whole of the first season —

no mean achievement for a new opera. Josephs's qualities of craftsmanship and ready appeal found a natural outlet in music for film and television. His scores helped to characterise television series including *All Creatures Great and Small*, *Claudian*, *Swallows and Amazons*, *Cider with Rosie* and many more, though perhaps he was most celebrated for the evocative, elegiac music he wrote for *The Great War*. He was music consultant to the London International Film School.

Josephs also held visiting professorships and acted as composer in residence at the University of Wisconsin, at Roosevelt University, Chicago, and at Ohio State University. He played an active part in English musical life on behalf of composers and their interests, serving the Composers' Guild and as a member of the council of the Royal Philharmonic Society. Generous with his time and warm in his dealings with his fellow-musicians, he also had the pleasant sense of humour that can be heard in some of his light music, not least the *Aelian Dances* and *Monkshere Dances* after Newcastle tunes. His northern roots combined fruitfully with his Jewish roots, and it was appropriate that he should have received an honorary doctorate in music from Newcastle University in 1978.

He married, in 1956, Valerie Wisbey. She survives him, together with their two daughters.

DR ANDREW PEARSON

Dr Andrew Pearson, OBE, physician and missionary, died on November 7 aged 75. He was born on December 10, 1921.



ANDREW PEARSON was a medical missionary — a man of remarkable practicality, inspired inwardly by a firm and constant Christian faith. He was a physician, surgeon, obstetrician, paediatrician, hospital administrator, lay preacher, builder, even plumber.

Andrew Pearson was born in China, the son of a Methodist doctor who had established his own local hospital in Shantung, Hunan. At the age of five, he came to school in England, at Glossop, and later studied medicine at Liverpool, where he qualified in 1944. After house posts there, he obtained a diploma in tropical medicine, and then took up service, it seemed inevitably, in China, where he quickly

gained a command of Mandarin. In Hankow and then Wuhan, he was called upon for both surgery and some general medicine, and had to learn to be very adaptable.

The core of his professional life was, however, to be spent in Africa, where he was medical superintendent of the Wesley Guild Hospital at Ilesha in Nigeria from 1952 to 1975. His history of the hospital, pub-

lished in 1966, tells, with the utmost modesty and honesty, how problems of water shortage, power failure, staff problems and government indifference or even interference were all overcome to maintain care for a population of around 100,000.

But he and his few colleagues achieved much more. This small hospital was to gain world renown. It was there that Dr David Morley introduced his Under Fives Clinics, treating young children free and so identifying the commonest causes of illness and death in an area where originally 45 per cent of children were dying by the age of five. The growth charts, checking nutritional status, were adopted internationally.

Pearson became convinced that the sort of doctor who could bring the greatest benefit in such a community was a generalist, turning his or her hand to most kinds of

hospital work but who also had local knowledge and could share much of the primary care service with non-physicians. Pearson became the first full-time director of training in the Faculty of General Medical Practice in Ilesha. He was later to share his enthusiasm with the World Health Organisation, the World Organisation of Family Doctors and Action in International Medicine (AIM), to which he became medical consultant in 1989.

In his busy retirement, sadly and suddenly cut short, he travelled in Nigeria, Zambia, Nepal, China, Western Samoa and the Philippines, always campaigning for the medical generalist.

He met Jean Frost (sister of Sir David) when both were active in the Student Christian Movement. They married in 1948 in China. She survives him, as do three sons and a daughter.

JACK LANE

Jack Lane, DFC, bookseller, died on November 6 aged 88. He was born on May 6, 1909.



IT WAS once said that the spines of several Fleet Street literary editors had been permanently bent by the weight of books they had regularly borne to Jack Lane, whose bookshop, Gaston's, was known in the trade as "the knackers' yard".

Lane and his partner, Leonard Frank, noticed in 1948 that, with the easing of paper rationing, review copies were flooding into the bookshops in and around Fleet Street. By buying the books at roughly a third of their published price from reviewers and then selling them on to public libraries at two thirds a good living could be made.

So Lane and Frank, who had worked at the City bookshop of Alfred Wilson, put their idea into practice by taking over the bookshop of Thomas J. Gaston, off the Strand (they later moved to Chancery Lane). Distinguished reviewers such as Anthony Burgess, A. J. P. Taylor and A. L. Rowse were soon carrying carrier bags of review copies to the poky little shop, all anxious to enjoy an agreeable tax-free perk.

Lane and Frank, later joined by their partner, Charles Driscoll, pioneered and cornered the market in the resale of review copies, fighting off competition from Harrods. At one point, the Inland Revenue

threatened Jack Lambert, the literary editor of *The Sunday Times*, with a hefty tax bill. But in a famous case (famous among reviewers, that is) it was established that review copies were "tools of the trade" and, as such, exempt from tax. It took the ending of the Net Book Agreement to put Gaston's out of business. But Lane himself had retired from the shop many years earlier to pursue his passion for London history, including visiting every square on foot.

John Downes Lane, the son of a Royal Navy captain, came from a musical family. His mother, Anna, was an accomplished cellist and his younger sister, Barbara, was a singer with the Royal Opera at Covent Garden. Lane himself had an excellent ear for music, and after a history degree at Keble College, Oxford, he became history master at Oak-

ham School, Rutland, where he enjoyed sneaking into the chapel to play the organ.

As a teacher in the 1930s, he toured Europe extensively by car and his many visits to Germany included a trip to the 1936 Berlin Olympics, where he saw Hitler arrive to mass adulation.

When war broke out, Lane volunteered for the Navy, but was turned down because of poor eyesight. Still keen, he volunteered for air crew and, thanks to the inscrutable wisdom of the authorities, found himself selected by the RAF for duty as an air-gunner, where eyesight was all-important. As an old boy of Wellington College, he was delighted to be flying in Wellington bombers. He survived 59 sorties with Bomber Command.

He was commissioned in 1942 and awarded the DFC in 1944 for sustained gallantry

during the whole of his first tour of operations. He would recall with delight his scariest moment in Bomber Command: not facing the enemy guns and fighters over Germany, but on a training mission over England, when he inadvertently trod on an unsecured hatch in the belly of a Wellington bomber.

The hatch disappeared into thin air, and was almost followed by Lane, who was saved only because his bulky flying kit jammed him by the shoulders. With his legs dangling out of the aeroplane, his desperate shouts went unheeded above the roar of the engines but, after half an hour, he was discovered by a crew member and dragged to safety. The RAF seemed more concerned about the loss of the hatch than the near loss of a budding aviator. Lane was put on a charge and fined £2 for losing government property.

In the grimmer years that followed, luck played a part in Lane's survival. He took part in the Nuremberg raid of March 1944, when 782 bombers were dispatched and 106 were lost. At the last moment, Lane was switched to a different plane. The crew he was originally to have flown with were all killed. It was this experience that made him an active member of the RAF church of St Clement Danes in the Strand, where he achieved a record 800 consecutive attendances.

Although once engaged, Lane never married.

PERSONAL COLUMN

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NOVEMBER 21 1997

TV LISTINGS

review: Television stars aid charity
Children in Need (BBC1, 7pm)
view: Matthew Bond says the
documentary tells only part
of the story. Pages 46, 47

OPINION

Watch his space
The actions of the allies on Iraq
in the next few months will deter-
mine whether this is an important
triumph for international order or
defeat that will have profound
consequences. Such a country re-
quires comprehensive, continuing
attention. Page 2

Russian not Balkan
The fields of instincts and intel-
lect have an understanding of the
strategic-dramatic effect of de-
pendency. Should ensure he stays in
a... Page 2

Light relief
The work of leading architects are
being compared to end the great
drama of Christmas. What
to do in Brighton November
1997. Page 2

COLUMNS

PETER STOTHARD
The London Festival of Informa-
tion and Communications is the
most important problem for the
city in the middle of this
year. It is a five-day, nine-
venue event, and its under-
standing of the food and
the city's future is a... Page 2

MATTHEW PARRIS
The City stands accused of
overcharging companies when
raising money for them, and
the Monopolies and Mergers
Commission is to investigate.
City methods of underwriting
issues of shares have been re-
ferred to the MMC by the Of-
fice of Fair Trading, which is
unhappy about the level of com-
mission companies must pay
when arranging equity finance.
Investment banks have tried to
address the concerns by in-
volving investors (known as sub-
underwriters) to offer to accept
lower commissions, previously
fixed by convention.
John Bridgeman, Director-
General of Fair Trading,
yesterday said that these inno-
vations had not gone far
enough. He said: "I remain
concerned that competition is
not working effectively in this
market. In spite of some ten-
dering for sub-underwriting,
the fees charged allowed sub-
underwriters to make sub-
stantial profits over and above
what might be regarded as
reasonable."
Critics argue that sub-
underwriting commissions
bear little relation to the often
negligible risks that investors
bear in guaranteeing the take-
up of a share issue.
The OFT said that more
than half the 60 rights issues it
has studied over the past year
have employed standard fees.
Traditionally these total 2 per
cent, with 1.25 per cent paid to
sub-underwriters, 0.25 per
cent paid to the broker and the
remaining 0.5 per cent kept by
the investment bank.
Some merchant bankers ex-
pressed surprise at the OFT
move. One said that City fees
are far below the 7 to 10 per cent
common in New York. This,
however, ignores the discount
on new shares, often 10 per cent.
Commentary, page 27

PETER RIDDELL
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Commentary, page 27

OBITUARIES

James Watterson, 80, who
founded the firm of James
Watterson & Co. in 1921, died
yesterday. Dr Andrew Pearce
Page 2

LETTERS

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overcharging companies when
raising money for them, and
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THE TIMES

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TODAY

ECONOMICS

Anatole Kaletsky
on a long series of
errors in Japan
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Bugsy Malone
swaggers on to
the London stage
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SPORT

Tottenham turn
to Gross for
rescue mission
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TELEVISION
AND
RADIO
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BUSINESS EDITOR Patricia Whearcroft

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 21 1997

Crisis in coal puts 5,000 jobs at risk

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE COAL industry faces
savage cutbacks next year,
with nearly 5,000 job losses
and output from deep mines
falling by a third, according
to figures based on Depart-
ment of Trade and Industry
estimates submitted to the
European Commission.
The stark outlook for coal in
the UK will be made public
next month by the Commis-
sion. It comes at a critical time
for the industry as RJB Min-
ing, Britain's biggest pro-
ducer, negotiates new con-
tracts with the electricity
generators. The contracts are
the first to be negotiated in the
private sector and will run
after current government-ar-
ranged deals end next March.
The DTI said that it sup-
plied figures to the Commis-
sion based on industry
estimates. But RJB disputes
this, saying it had challenged
DTI figures as overly pes-
simistic. A spokesman said:

"We are still talking. We don't
know what the final outcome
will be yet. But we intend to
prove the pessimists wrong."
RJB repeated its call for a halt
to gas-fired power stations
pending a full energy review.
The estimates of such a big
reduction in the workforce
and output implies the closure
of about ten pits. Industry
insiders have given warning
that if that happens the coal
industry would be too small to
support vital service com-
panies and would die.
The Commission's report
will say that mines directly
employed in deep mines will
fall from 9,900 this year to a
yearly average of 4,700 next
year, with the year-end year
workforce projected at 5,000.
About 20,000 people are em-
ployed in the coal industry,
including opencast mines. It is
estimated that service indus-
tries, such as mining equip-
ment, employ another 12,000.

Another 18,000 jobs are said to
be dependent on mining.
The Commission figures
will inflame the growing polit-
ical row over coal and the
Government's refusal to inter-
vene. John Grogan, MP for
Selby, said: "These official
DTI figures will send terrible
shock waves through the coal-
field communities. We need an
energy policy co-ordinated at
Cabinet level to avoid the
crisis in coal we are facing."
Pat Carragher, general sec-
retary of the British Associa-
tion of Colliery Managers,
said the forecast could prove
"darkly accurate". He added:
"They emphasise the urgency
with which the Government
must address the issue."
Sam Matkin, general sec-
retary of the supervisory staff
section of the Union of Demo-
cratic Mineworkers, said: "If
coal falls to this level you can
say the industry is finished.
Suppliers will close down and
millions of tonnes of reserves
will be lost."

Slowdown eases rate rise pressure

By ALASDAIR MURRAY AND PHILIP BASSETT

PRESSURE for an increase
in interest rates eased yester-
day after key economic data
offered evidence that the
economy is starting to slow.
Third-quarter GDP was
revised downwards while
money supply and mort-
gage data showed a slow-
down in growth. The latest
Confederation of British In-
dustry survey also pointed
to a worsening outlook in
the manufacturing sector.
The weaker-than-expected
data helped the stock mar-
ket to climb to its highest
level for two weeks. The
FTSE 100 closed up 78.3, at
4,908.4, helped by a strong
showing on Wall Street.
Third-quarter GDP
growth was cut from 1 per
cent to 0.9 per cent with the
annual rate falling to 3.8 per
cent. Economists also point-

ed to a slowdown in quarter-
ly consumer spending
growth — from 1.5 per cent
to 1.2 per cent.
Andrew Cates, UK econo-
mist at UBS, said: "It is
highly unlikely that we will
see a further rate rise when
the monetary policy com-
mittee meets in December."
But Kevin Duffington,
UK economist at Hoare
Govett, said strong employ-
ment income growth is like-
ly to underpin consumer
spending into next year and
above-trend growth would
continue.
The CBI reported man-
ufacturers' expectations of
output growth at a two-year
low because of weakened
export orders. It predicted
that rates will rise once more
to 7.5 per cent, and stay there
until the end of 1998.

PowerGen fight, page 26

End of the family line at Hanson

By ADAM JONES

ROBERT HANSON is to
leave the board of the public
company co-founded by Lord
Hanson, his father, to spend
more time with the family's
private transport business.
The 37-year-old will receive
about £330,000 compensation
for the 18 months left on his
contract as corporate develop-
ment director.
The move marks the end of
an era at Hanson plc, which
has been stymied through
demerger and disposal into a
shadow of the conglomerate
built by Lord Hanson and
Lord White. Lord Hanson
retires as chairman at the end
of the year, when his son also
departs.
Robert Hanson was seen by
some as heir-apparent when
appointed to the board in 1992,
joining from NM Rothschild,
the merchant bank, at the age

of 32. He denied at the time
that a dynasty was being
shaped.
Yesterday he said it was
always a misconception that
he was to succeed his father. "I
didn't join thinking I was
going to become chairman,"
he said. "I was employed to do
a specific job that I had trained
to do at Rothschild."
He said the "new" Hanson,
concentrated on building ma-
terials, was less of a challenge.
Robert Hanson is already
chairman of Hanson Trans-
port Group, the family trans-
port and distribution com-
pany. Its largest clients
are ICI, Zeneca and House of
Fraser.
Mr Hanson had been spear-
heading attempts to find a
buyer for Grove Worldwide,
Hanson's crane-making
business.



Robert Hanson: departing

Conran and BAA fight over duty-free sales

A ROW broke out last night between
Sir Terence Conran, the design guru
and London restaurateur, and BAA,
the privatised airports operator.
The row erupted over a letter by Sir
Terence to *The Times* accusing BAA of
exploiting taxpayers by selling duty-
free goods at prices only marginally
lower than in the high street.
Sir Terence, who earlier this month
designed the surroundings for the
Anglo-French summit at Canary
Wharf, said: "The fact that we, as
taxpayers, subsidise their duty-free
sales is really a disgrace and enor-
mously to the benefit of BAA
shareholders."
He went on to attack the general
quality of airports, saying: "They are

certainly not aggressive about provid-
ing a calm, welcoming and well-
organised environment for travellers."
For BAA, Des Wilson, responded by
calling Sir Terence "a national bore".
He added: "It's time he shut up and
made a better job of running his
restaurants. He speaks for nobody, not
the retailers, not the passengers and
not the airlines, only for himself."
Mr Wilson said that airport custom-
ers wanted more retailing. "More than
half of our income comes from retail-
ing which we spend on providing
national airports and infrastructure
free of charge. If anything, it's the
taxpayers who are being subsidised."

BG to boost exploration by selling £800m estate

By CARL MORTIMER

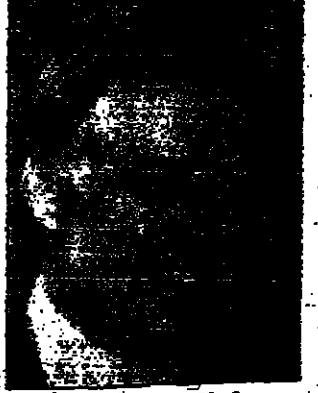
BG, the gas pipeline and exploration
group, is planning a wholesale sell-off
of its vast property portfolio. The
company is hoping to secure a single
buyer for a package of real estate
valued in its books at some £800
million in an effort to redeploy re-
sources into its expanding gas explora-
tion and international businesses.
BG is already selling key sites and has
just agreed terms with Berkeley Group
for the sale of a 32-acre site next to
Chelsea Harbour, West London. Berke-
ley paid between £25 million and £30
million and plans a £100 million residen-
tial and commercial development.
BG has more than 1,000 properties,

many of them valuable city-centre
sites. Philip Hampton, chief executive
in charge of disposing many sites in a single
deal, similar to the recent Ministry of
Defence sale of sites. BG's portfolio is
worth £800 million, but costs of
restoring contaminated land will cut
proceeds. BG has provisions of £350
million for environmental liabilities.
BG lifted pre-tax profits to £21
million, from £18 million, in the third
quarter, making £780 million for the
nine months to September. Upstream
exploration turned in a £62 million
profit for the nine months, against last
year's £28 million loss. Transco profits
rose by £114 million to £786 million.

Times, page 28

Granada digital aiming to rival BSkyB

By RAYMOND SNOOPY AND DOMINIC WALSH



Robinson: prediction

GERRY ROBINSON, Grana-
da's chairman, yesterday pre-
dicted that the company's
move into digital terrestrial
television would create
another British Sky Broad-
casting in terms of value.
In partnership with Carlton
Communications, Granada
has a 50 per cent stake in
British Digital Broadcasting,
which launches 12 digital ter-
restrial channels in the final
quarter next year. Mr Robin-
son said he saw "no reason"
why the launch should not

take place on schedule despite
regulatory uncertainty, add-
ing that talks with Brussels
were in the final stage.
He conceded he might not
be able to serve as chairman of
BSkyB, in which Granada has
a large stake, and on the BDB
board, BSkyB, in which News
International, owner of *The
Times*, has a 40 per cent stake,
is to be a major programme
supplier to BDB.
Charles Allen, chief execu-
tive, said that digital ter-
restrial represented "a very low-cost

entry to pay TV" for Granada.
About 90 per cent of the costs
would be in programmes and
the venture would have start-
up costs of just £75 million.
Revenues from subscription
TV would surpass that of TV
advertising in 2004.
The group's media division,
which includes Granada TV,
LWT and Yorkshire-Tyne
Television, reported an 18
per cent rise in operating
profit to £168 million. Profits at
hospitality rose 41 per cent as
the fruits of the Forte acqui-

sition came through strongly.
Group profits before tax and
exceptional items rose by 35
per cent to £650 million, on
turnover up from £3.82 billion
to £4.09 billion. Adjusted earn-
ings rose 20 per cent to 50.6p a
share. A final dividend of
9.84p gives a 14.5p (13.0p) total.
Mr Robinson said: "It's
very unlikely you'll see a
major acquisition from us in
the next year."

Commentary, page 27
Living up to boast, page 29

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Wendy O'Keilly
Senior Treasury Manager

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Storehouse says retail spending is back up

By Fraser Nelson

STOREHOUSE yesterday became one of the first high-street retailers to confirm the October retail spending bounce, reporting that sales across the Bhs to Mothercare group have risen by 9.4 per cent in the past five weeks.

The company's shares edged up by 1/2 p. to 235 1/2 p. as it said that profits lost in September seem set to be reclaimed in the run up to Christmas, contradicting other retailers' forecasts that the money is lost for good.

Members vote for AMP flotation

By Marianne Curphey, Insurance Correspondent

ALMOST two million members of Australian Mutual Provident (AMP) have voted overwhelmingly in favour of the group's demutualisation. The vote paves the way for 170,000 UK policyholders to receive windfalls of £2,500 each next year.

Just over half of the potential 19 million votes were cast in favour of the £11 billion flotation (£4.5 billion), the world's biggest demutualisation.

However, the City said that Storehouse's like-for-like sales growth was disappointing and that its attempts to transform its flagship Bhs store are still in their infancy.

The company made a flat operating profit of £40 million (£37.3 million) from its continuing stores, which took earnings per share to 6.6p (6.1p). Profits of Bhs rose by 9.7 per cent, to £27.5 million, in the six months to October 11, after two new stores opened and 76 stores were given a refit under a £65.5 million spending programme. The chain's like-for-like sales grew by 1.3 per cent.



Chris Martin, left, Storehouse finance director, and Keith Edelman are at odds with other retailers' Christmas forecasts

PowerGen ready to renew fight for Rec

By Christine Buckley, Industrial Correspondent

POWERGEN is to renew its fight to buy a regional electricity company (Rec) if the Government signals support for vertically integrated energy companies in its judgment on the Pacificorp bid for The Energy Group.

The company confirmed that it has had initial talks with a number of groups covering a wide range of potential deals. But Ed Wallis, chairman, repeated his view that competition would be best served by five or six large vertically integrated players, involved in the provision of electricity from power station

to plug. "Until that structure is in place the real benefits of competition will not flow through," he said. PowerGen held informal talks with the Government at the Labour Party conference but Mr Wallis said that vertical integration was already evident through joint ventures and through British Gas's move into electricity.

PowerGen was blocked from buying Midlands Electricity by the Conservative Government in a surprise ruling that overturned a Monopolies and Mergers Commission report. There has been speculation that PowerGen wants to take a 30 per cent stake in Midlands but is also looking at Cnergy, the US company that owns half of Midlands.

Tempos, page 28

ED&F Man doubles first-half profits

By Richard Miles

THE sale of five cocoa processing plants has helped to more than double first-half pre-tax profits at ED&F Man, the agricultural products to financial services group.

Profits for the six months to September 30 were £61.2 million, against £27.2 million in the previous year. Excluding earnings from the cocoa sale, profits rose 51 per cent to £39.7 million. Strongest growth came in financial services — a range of futures and commodities funds aimed at wealthy private investors — which improved 75 per cent. The agricultural division saw a 27 per cent rise in profits.

Tempos, page 28

Babcock cost-cutting to go on

By Adam Jones

BABCOCK International, the engineering group, incurred a pre-tax loss of £15.5 million in the first half, as it continued its cull of underperforming businesses.

Babcock, which owns the Rosyth dockyard in Scotland, made a profit of £3.1 million before an £18.6 million excep-

tional loss on the sale of its process engineering division to Amec in September. Dr John Parker, chairman, said further cost-cutting was planned at the yard.

Babcock's newly identified core activities — facilities management and materials handling — made a pre-tax profit of £9 million, compared to £9.7 million in 1996, on turnover of £245.6 million.

Accountant jailed for BCCI fraud

By Jon Ashworth

AN ACCOUNTANT who kept records of a \$1.2 billion (£710 million) fraud on his office computer has been jailed for 5 1/2 years at the Central Criminal Court, in the last of six trials arising from the collapse of BCCI, the Bank of Credit and Commerce International.

Abdul Chiragh, 53, was convicted on Wednesday of false accounting, conspiracy to defraud and perverting the course of justice. He was ordered to pay £20,000 costs. The outcome marks a "full house" for the Serious Fraud Office (SFO), working with the City of London Police, which has won convictions in all the BCCI trials.



Chiragh: £20,000 costs

Gulf Group, a shipping group run from Geneva. Chiragh produced bogus accounts for more than 40 offshore companies. Police who raided his offices in Tooting, South London, found details of a \$1.2 billion "IOU" between BCCI and Gulf Group on his computer. Abbas Gokal, former Gulf Group chairman, was sentenced to 14 years in May for his part in the BCCI scandal.

Broking revenues boost Flemings

By Richard Miles, Banking Correspondent

FLEMINGS, the British investment bank with substantial interests in the Far East, has announced a 6 per cent rise in its first-half pre-tax profits, in spite of the turbulence on Asian stock markets.

Profits rose to £91.1 million on the back of strong growth in asset management activities and sharply higher revenues from broking in Asian, Emerging European and Latin American securities. However, the bank's share of profits from Jardine Fleming, its joint venture in Hong Kong, declined by 40 per cent to £14.9 million. At 16 per cent of total profits, this is the lowest contribution from Jardine Fleming for many years.

William Garrett, group chief executive, said that conditions remained difficult in the Far East. "Because of the unsettled market conditions, the short-term outlook is uncertain," he said. "We are cautiously optimistic about the second half, given the range of our businesses and their geographical diversity."

Sale in US continues restructuring at ICI

ICI is raising an initial £200 million with the sale of its UK-based fertiliser business to Terra Industries, of the United States. The disposal, the latest stage in the wide-ranging restructuring of ICI, could yield a further £50 million if certain profit-related targets are met. The disposal is expected to give rise to a pre-tax exceptional gain before provisions of about £140 million.

The business produces fertilisers, ammonia, nitric acid, sodium nitrite and liquid carbon dioxide. In 1996 it earned profits of £60 million before interest and tax on turnover of £220 million. Net assets are about £52 million. The proceeds will be used to reduce group borrowings, the company said.

Dual-fuel deal inquiry

ELECTRICITY companies offering a dual-fuel deal for gas and electricity to household customers face a joint investigation by the electricity and gas regulators amid concern over predatory pricing. Gas companies prevented from marketing electricity until next April have complained that they are at a disadvantage to regional electricity companies able to sell gas to 4.5 million customers in the three regions already open to domestic competition.

WPP buys Batey stake

WPP, the world's biggest advertising agency, has acquired a 37 per cent stake in Batey Holdings, a leading Singapore advertising group, and aims to have a third of its operations in emerging markets within five years. Batey Holdings owns 80 per cent of Batey Ads, whose clients include Sony and Visa. WPP will buy a further 11.6 per cent in 2001, and has the option to add another 14.8 per cent in 2002. It will spend up to \$80 million (£29.6 million) in cash on the acquisition.

Lambert grows in US

LAMBERT FENCHURCH, the insurance broker formed this year by a merger of Lowndes Lambert and Fenchurch Group, is to buy The Kooper Group, a New York employee benefits broker, for a performance-linked price of up to \$35 million (£20.5 million). The initial payment is \$3 million. Lambert lifted pre-tax profits by 42 per cent, to £7.1 million, in its first half. Earnings per share remained 5.4p. The interim dividend is 2.9p. The shares fell 3 1/2 p. to 115p, on competition worries.

Hicking Pentecost up

HICKING PENTECOST, the industrial threads and knitwear company, lifted pre-tax profit 32 per cent to £5.1 million in its half year to September 30. Gains in the US and Far East offset the impact of currency in European markets. The company said Far East earnings were almost unaffected by recent turmoil because it mostly serves those producing goods offshore for US and European customers. Adjusted earnings per share rose 11 per cent to 13.6p. The interim dividend is 2.7p, up 13 per cent.

York Waterworks rises

YORK WATERWORKS, the small independent water company, followed its larger water company peers in raising its dividend ahead of growth in pre-tax profit. The company, serving the city of York, lifted the interim dividend 8.3 per cent to 4.5p, payable on January 20, while pre-tax profits rose 2.1 per cent to £1.8 million in the six months to September 30. High dividend payouts by water companies have come under increasing attack from the industry regulator.

Bank	Buy	Sell	Bank	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	2.58	2.58	Malta	0.882	0.883
Austria S	21.64	18.58	Netherlands Gld	3.498	3.501
Belgium F	63.66	58.72	New Zealand \$	2.88	2.88
Canada \$	2.529	2.541	Norway Kr	12.25	11.81
Cyprus Cyp	0.003	0.003	Portugal Esc	212.05	250.00
Denmark Kr	11.75	10.95	S Africa Rd	8.93	7.9
Finland Mk	8.38	8.64	Spain Pta	258.79	240.00
France F	10.38	9.51	Sweden Kr	13.35	12.49
Germany Dm	3.10	2.85	Switzerland F	2.33	2.32
Greece Dr	488	447	Turkey Lira	329.930	306.822
Hong Kong \$	13.59	12.79	USA \$	1.602	1.599
Iceland	121	101			
Ireland Pt	1.18	1.09			
Israel Sh	6.57	5.72			
Italy Lira	3062	2815			
Japan Yen	230.13	212.60			

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A Bridgeman too far for City



COMMENTARY

by our City Editor

Could there be just a hint of peevishness in John Bridgeman's decision to refer the issue of underwriting to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission? On Wednesday, the President of the Board of Trade towed the line with Brussels and allowed the merger of the cross-channel ferry operators of Stena and P&O. Mr. Bridgeman, the Director General of Fair Trading, had indicated his opposition to the move, at least without severe restrictions, but his views did not prevail. So less than 24 hours later he had the satisfaction of putting the City in the dock instead.

To be fair, he had been threatening such action for some time. His finger wagging and threats in the direction of the City's merchant bankers must have reminded many of them of the repeated exhortations from Nanny: "Do that again, and you'll stand in the corner." In his explanation for referring the matter, he sounds as infuriated as Nanny after her warnings were repeatedly ignored.

But, in this case, the culprits are not as guilty as he would have us believe. Mr. Bridgeman is perturbed by the cost of underwriting fees. He sees a norm of 2 per cent and smells an unhealthy monopoly. The American banks that have moved into the City have told him he is right. They would prefer to see the traditional rights issue aban-

doned in favour of the book-building system that they operate, and which, as a happy aside, happens to generate fees of very much more than 2 per cent. It also does away with the tricky business of pre-emption rights.

Mr. Bridgeman has listened to both sides and also to a few businessmen who, naturally enough, say they would like to be able to raise capital more cheaply. Of course they would say that. But few take up the chance of launching a deeply discounted, not underwritten, rights issue, for that is such an indignity. Instead, they generally pay up for the certainty that a traditional, underwritten, rights issue will bring. Since rights issues are often allied to the making of acquisitions, they are not keen to risk the money not materialising. And that is far from unknown in the case of the American book-building exercises, which can often be pulled at the last minute in the face of tricky market conditions.

In the face of Mr. Bridgeman's threats, a few houses, particularly Schroders, have tried to demonstrate a little ingenuity in putting together cheaper fund raising packages but it has not been enough to satisfy him. So

now there is to be a year's investigation, which is unlikely to produce much of benefit to industry.

But a real disaster could occur if those who are called upon to pronounce on the issue are not fully clued up on the niceties of City practice and financial detail. It is essential that the Monopolies Commission committee that carries out the investigation should consist of more than a quartet of worthies.

An uncomfortable stay at The Savoy

Fresh from finalising his own deal with Merrill Lynch, Carol Galley could have been forgiven a little self-congratulation yesterday as Granada reported figures that more than justified her faith in Gerry Robinson and his team.

The Forte acquisition is proving to be the gem that Robinson

promised, as Granada's management squeeze more efficiencies, and more profits, out of the business. But one aspect of Forte is proving to be rather more difficult than Robinson expected. The Savoy tangle, from which he had said that he hoped to extricate Granada this year, is apparently no closer to being resolved. Lady Wontner is proving a formidable obstacle. In the widow of the former Savoy chairman, even Ms Galley may have met her match.

This is the one aspect of the Forte/Granada affair that causes Sir Rocco a degree of amusement as he makes use of his regular table in the Savoy Grill. The Fortes' ambitions to own the Savoy group, instead of just a majority of its shares and a minority of its votes, were frustrated by the Wontner family and their linked trusts. Sir Rocco has been heard to remark, with some pleasure, that he can see Gerry Robinson being caught in the

same predicament for even longer.

Yesterday, Mr. Robinson was his usual relaxed self on the subject, indicating that the increasing profitability of the Savoy lessened the pain of relative powerlessness. But he admitted that the time scale for sorting out the problem had now extended by another year. This, he said, was necessary for the share structure of the group to be simplified before Granada could sell its stake.

Yet why should Lady Wontner and her cohorts agree to a change in the share structure, since it benefits them? If Granada's shares were fully enfranchised, a buyer of the stake would assume control of the group. But Lady Wontner shows no sign of wanting to give up that control. Still smarting after being politely evicted from her penthouse apartment at Claridge's, she has the consolation of being courted by would-be buyers of

the luxury hotels group, only to refuse them.

Her intransigence is but a minor irritation for Gerry Robinson, for the rest of his empire is moving strongly in the right direction, both on the media side and what he calls hospitality, which, for those who might not have guessed, includes the Little Chef operations.

C for consistency sought by City

The chocolate body paint has already found its way into BHS stores, this year in new after-dinner mint and capuccino flavours. Christmas stocking fillers are important to the business and, after a set of disappointing figures, the group is hoping for a festive boost.

Beneath the seasonal fripperies, BHS has been having one of its periodic identity crises. Under the guidance of Sir Terence Conran and then the very American David Dworkin, the chain aimed to throw off its dowdy image and head firmly upmarket. Storehouse chief executive Keith Edelman has been in place for four years, but he now concedes that the company may

have been out of step with its market. "Know thy customer" should be a first principle for any business. Edelman took the novel step of stationing photographers at the BHS doors, and the results were enlightening. Now the stores are squarely targeting the "C" section of the marketplace, large in every sense: the average size of dress walking out of the shop is a 16.

The new strategy, effectively putting BHS back where it started, sensibly exempts the stores from going head to head against the mighty M&S, a message not wasted on the ex-M&S Storehouse chairman, Alan Smith. With Littlewoods retreating on the high street, the opportunities to pick up extra business look encouraging.

But the City, like BHS customers, will want to see consistency before it overcomes its scepticism to Storehouse.

Eddie steady go

HAVING begun a love-in with Gordon Brown, the formerly sceptical Eddie George now seems intent on cosying up to the future euro chiefs. The Bank of England Governor is backing Wim Duisenberg in the battle to become head of the European Central Bank. For a man who but a few months ago appeared to be on the way out of Threadneedle Street, Mr. George is now looking a good bet for the vacant ECB seat in Frankfurt.

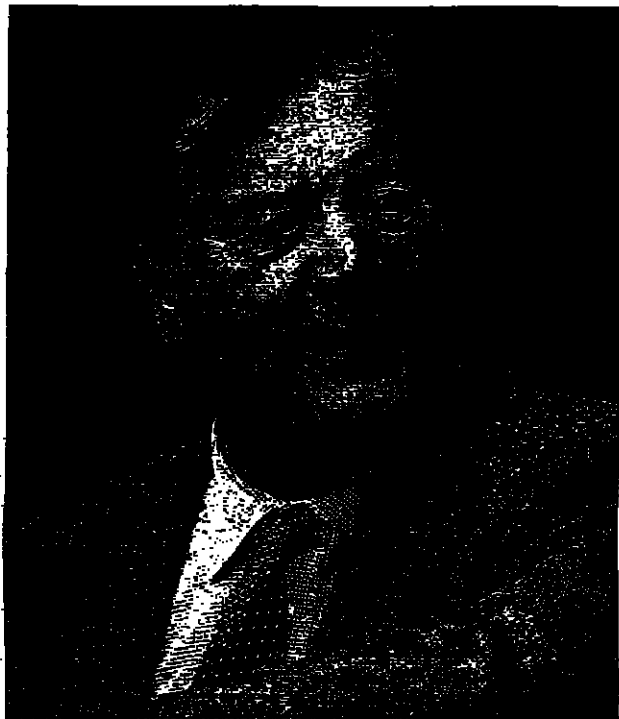
UniChem to join French rival in £278m merger

By FRASER NELSON

UNICHEM, the drugs wholesaler chaired by Kenneth Clarke, is to become the second-largest player in Europe's drugs market after agreeing to a £278 million merger with Alliance Santé, its French rival.

The new company, to be named Alliance UniChem, will be formed via the takeover by UniChem of its new partner. The enlarged company expects to generate profits of £102 million on sales of £489 billion this year alone. It will be 37 per cent owned by Stefano Pessina, founder of Alliance Santé, and will be chaired by Mr. Clarke.

Jeffrey Harris, who helped to mastermind UniChem's seven-year transition from mutual organisation to £500 million public company, said the merger would produce an extra £5 million of profits a year without job losses.



Kenneth Clarke will be chairman of the enlarged business

He said: "This deal is not about cost savings. It is about new revenue streams coming on flow. The new group will have a much bigger warehouse network. It will be able to use a much bigger marketing force across Europe, and we will be able to offer a much better data service to all our customers."

The City gave an enthusiastic reception to the deal, marking UniChem's shares up 33p to 346p. One of the first

changes will be to collate sales figures in-house, showing which products sell best in which markets, and then sell the data to drug producers.

Both companies have been cutting the number of drugs warehouses, a process which Mr. Harris said will be "speed-

ed up" by using the enlarged network. The third advantage is that, when a new drug comes to the market, both companies will use each other's marketing team.

The merger comes ten months after UniChem's thwarted bid for Lloyds Chem-

ists, now owned by Gehe, a key rival, which left it nursing £161 million in costs. Mr. Harris does not share the City's view that UniChem was better off without Lloyds. He said: "I've heard that view around, but I don't share it. If we had done the Lloyds deal, then the timing of this merger would have been difficult, but I think the Lloyds acquisition would have been a very valuable deal."

Although Mr. Clarke will be chairing a much bigger company, he is not expected to see the terms of his £120,000-a-year contract increased. Mr. Pessina will become deputy chairman responsible for international development. Mr. Harris remains chief executive. Patrick Ponsolle, chairman of Eurotunnel, becomes non-executive director.

The deal depends on shareholder approval, with an extraordinary meeting due to be called next month, and on EU approval, expected within the next six weeks. UniChem is to pay a final dividend of 9.7p a share. *Times*, page 28

Chloride sales hit by pound

By CHRIS AYRES

CHLORIDE, the emergency power-supply specialist, said yesterday that the strength of sterling had wiped almost £6 million off sales for the six months ended September 30.

However, turnover rose 3 per cent from £53.8 million to £55.5 million, with pre-tax profits rising from £2.9 million to £4.2 million. Earnings per share were up 56 per cent, from 0.86p to 1.34p, and an interim dividend of 0.28p (0.18p) will be paid on February 6.

Ray Horrocks, Chloride's chairman, said: "The board remains confident that our ongoing programme of ... building sales in new markets will underpin continued growth in earnings and shareholder value."

Powell Duffryn sells Eurogas

By ADAM JONES

POWELL DUFFRYN, the ports and engineering group, began the disposal of its fuel distribution division yesterday, selling Eurogas, its liquefied petroleum gas subsidiary, to Calor for £13.5 million.

Powell Duffryn is coming to the end of a major restructuring that has now freed about £90 million in capital from disposals in the past two years. It has still to sell four businesses, which employ £13.8 million in capital, including the oil component of its fuel distribution activities.

The company announced interim profits before tax of £21.2 million yesterday, up from £6.6 million, although the 1996 figure was hit by an £11.5 million exceptional charge. Its Teesside ports benefited from higher oil tonnage and roll-on, roll-off ship-

ping volumes, while engineering was held back by a £1 million currency hit.

After the disposal, which will dilute earnings in the second half, net debt will be down to about £8 million, having fallen from nearly £90 million in 1996. Earnings rose from 13.8p to 17.1p. An unchanged interim dividend of 8.0p a share is to be paid.

Barry Hartiss, chief executive, said the sale of Eurogas to Calor will have no effect on earnings after the dilution this winter.

Mr. Hartiss said the company is more likely to invest in bolt-on acquisitions for its mechanical engineering businesses than in ports.

The company closed its pipe-coating activities last month, at no net cost. The shares rose from 431½p to trade at 444½p.

Growth for distillery in flat market

By DOMINIC WALSH

GLENMORANGIE, the Scotch whisky maker, weathered tougher competition to lift pre-tax profits by 6 per cent to £45.7 million in the six months to September 30. Against an industry backdrop of flat volumes for which the company lifted total volumes by 8 per cent in the year to September 30, with its Glenmorangie brand improving by 11 per cent. The group achieved a 16 per cent increase in the UK.

Turnover was slightly ahead at £22.81 million, due largely to a reduction in bulk sales. At constant exchange rates, profits would have been 10 per cent ahead. Earnings rose 6 per cent to 23.42p per A share and 11.71p per B share. The interim dividend, payable on January 15, is 3.25p (3.025p) per A share and 1.625p (1.513p) per B share.

EASTERN ENERGY LIMITED

Notice of application for Private Electricity Supply Licence under section 6(2) of the Electricity Act 1989.

Eastern Energy Limited hereby gives notice that it has made an application to the Director General of Electricity Supply for a Private Electricity Supply Licence authorising the supply of electricity to any premises in England, Wales and Scotland which, at the time the Licence is given, the Licence is to be used for the purpose of supplying electricity to or consuming less than 25,000kWh per annum and which is not the subject of a restriction under the terms of Condition 2 of the Standard Second Tier Supply Licence, as set out below.

As required by Regulation 7(1) of the Electricity (Applications for Licences and Extensions of Licences) Regulations 1990, here follow full details:

1. Full name of the applicant(s): Eastern Energy Limited
2. Address of the applicant(s) or, in the case of a body corporate, the registered or principal office: registered office: E.O. Box 46, Westwood Park, Westwood, Ipswich IP7 2AQ
3. Where the applicant is a company, the full names of the current Directors and the company's registered number: John Ponsolle (Director) and Paul Colin Smith (Company number: 3183389)
4. Where a holding of 20 per cent or more of the shares of an applicant is held by a body corporate or an unincorporated association carrying on a trade or business with or without a view to profit, the name(s) and address(es) of the holder(s) of such shares shall be provided: One hundred per cent of the allotted share capital is held by Eastern Group plc, whose registered office is at 51, Abchurch Lane, London, EC4N 3DF.
5. Dated date from which the Licence is to take effect: 1 April 1998
6. A sufficient description adequately specifying the nature and situation of the premises intended to be supplied, separately identifying premises within the power bands specified in and to the extent provided by paragraph 7 below:
 - (a) Designated Premises as defined in Condition 26 of the Standard Second Tier Supply Licence - that is to say premises in England, Wales and Scotland (except in the authorised area of Eastern Electricity) at which a supply is taken wholly or mainly for domestic purposes or such premises at which the normal annual consumption of electricity will amount to no more than 12,000kWh; and
 - (b) Other premises in England, Wales and Scotland (except in the authorised area of Eastern Electricity) at which a supply is taken for business purposes and at which the normal annual consumption of electricity will amount to no more than 25,000kWh.
7. (a) Subject to sub-paragraph (b) indicates the total number of premises intended to be supplied in each power band as shown in the table below, together with the aggregate energy forecast to be supplied and the aggregate estimated maximum demand for each power band.

Power Band	Number of Premises	Aggregate maximum demand	Energy (Gwh) to be supplied
(A) Not exceeding 0.1 MW	0	0	0
(B) Exceeding 0.1 MW but not exceeding 1.0 MW	0	0	0
- (b) If the data in paragraph 7 above is on or after 1st April 1994 then only Power Band A shall be completed and if the said date is on or after 1st April 1998 then this paragraph shall cease to have effect.

The electricity will be supplied using the distribution systems of Public Electricity Suppliers.

5. A statement of the extent (if any) to which the applicant considers it necessary for powers under Schedule 3 (compulsory acquisition of land etc) and under Schedule 4 (other powers etc) to the Act to be given through the Licence for which he is applying: No such powers are required.

10. Details of any Licence held or being applied for by the applicant in respect of the generation, transmission or supply of electricity: None.

Approach lifts Allied Colloids

ALLIED COLLOIDS, the chemicals group, has responded to reports that it is being courted by Laporte, its UK rival, by saying that it has had a "tentative offer" from a third party that may or may not lead to an offer for it.

The statement lifted shares in Allied by 9p to 139p, near a five-year high, valuing the company at almost £1 billion.

Allied is to sell its super-absorbents business to a subsidiary of Amcol International, for at least £2 million. The price may rise, depending on the business's performance. The deal includes licensing of Allied technology.

Friendly deal

Friendly Hotels is selling its services offices division for an initial £4 million, almost two years after putting it up for sale. It is selling 15 of its 17 Premier House units to Marylebone Warwick Balfour, the property group, for £3.5 million, and has sold one separately for £500,000. The other unit's lease ends soon. The MWB earn-out deal may yield an extra £7 million.

Car venture

Car Group, the car supermarketers operator, is entering a £40 million joint venture with Sun Life to develop sites. Car Group pre-tax profits rose from £4.6 million to £4.8 million in the year to August 31. A 312p final dividend makes 4.68p.

Elliott ahead

B Elliott, a maker of engineering systems, is lifting its interim dividend by 12.5 per cent, to 1.35p, after pre-tax profits up 33 per cent to £2.42 million in the half year to October 3.

POWERGEN PLC

HALF-YEAR RESULTS

Commenting on the results, Chairman, Ed Wallis, said: "This was a good first half performance. Our UK electricity business continues to return solid results in a market where intense competition from new entrants pushed our market share below 20 per cent for the first time. Operating profits doubled from upstream gas and our market leading CHP business also increased its profit contribution. We are preparing for 1998 liberalisation by developing our integrated electricity and gas strategy. Our international operations performed well. The Board expects 1997/98 to be another satisfactory year for PowerGen."

	Unaudited Half year to 28 September 1997	Unaudited Half year to 29 September 1996
Turnover - continuing activities	£m	£m
Operating profit - continuing activities	166	150
Exceptional profit on sale of fixed asset investment	-	69
Net interest payable	(12)	(12)
Profit on ordinary activities before taxation	154	207
Tax on profit on ordinary activities	(38)	(36)
Windfall tax	(196)	-
(Loss) / Profit on ordinary activities after taxation	(80)	171
Minority interest	-	5
(Loss) / Profit attributable to shareholders	(80)	176
Dividends	(59)	(49)
Retained (Loss) / Profit for the period	(139)	127
(Loss) / Earnings per ordinary share	(12.5)p	25.5p
Earnings per ordinary share (excluding windfall tax and exceptional items)	18.1p	15.5p
Dividends per ordinary share	9.0p	7.8p

PowerGen shareholders can choose - if they wish - to have future dividends paid to them in PowerGen shares (known as 'New Shares'), instead of by cheque. To do so, they have to complete and return a Scrip Dividend Mandate form. PowerGen's 1997/98 Interim Dividend - 9.0p net per share - is to be paid on 31 December 1997 to shareholders registered in the Company's books at the close of business on 5 December 1997. Shareholders who have already sent in a Scrip Dividend Mandate form will be paid the Interim Dividend in shares, and need do nothing more. Shareholders who would like to be paid in shares should phone PowerGen's Registrars on 0117 976 3005. The Registrars will supply the Terms and Conditions of the Scrip Dividend Plan and a Scrip Dividend Mandate form. They can also deal with any queries, and cancellations.

KEY DATES:

1 December 1997:	PowerGen Shares begin to trade 'ex dividend.'
5 December 1997 5.00pm:	The price of a New Share is available by phoning 0117 976 3005.
5 December 1997:	Shareholders on the register at close of business qualify for the 1997/98 Interim Dividend.
9 December 1997:	The last date for Mandate forms or cancellations to be received by the Registrars.
by 30 December 1997:	Dividend Cheques and Certificates for New Shares posted.
31 December 1997:	Interim Dividend paid. New Shares can be traded.

The full results announcement may be seen on the PowerGen Internet web site at www.pgen.com

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[illegible]



There is always crisis in the arts world. It goes with the territory, boy. But the present mood is different. Let me explain it obliquely. The Spanish Inquisition had a torture called, simply, "hope". A prisoner would be allowed to escape, given a glimpse of daylight. He would climb what he imagined to be the last barrier to freedom... and drop straight into a trap laid by his captors. In an instant his spirit would be crushed. Luigi Dallapiccola wrote a wonderful opera, *Il prigioniero*, on the subject.

Well, in 1997 the British arts world was tortured by hope. Before the general election, the naivety coming from leading luvvies was breathtaking. Talk of "ending an 18-year dark age" was commonplace. So was rejoicing at the coming of a Government "that really understands our needs". Never mind that Labour's arts policy was a flimsy tissue of vague buzzwords. A kind of Orwellian doublethink gripped the arts world: a belief in what it wanted to

Luvvies fall out of love with Labour

believe, rather than what all available evidence suggested.

Now the truth has dawned. Hope, so fondly kindled in springtime, has turned to ashes in the cold winds of autumn. I haven't yet heard anybody in the arts world say "come back Mrs Bottomley, all is forgiven". But disillusion is swelling like a blister.

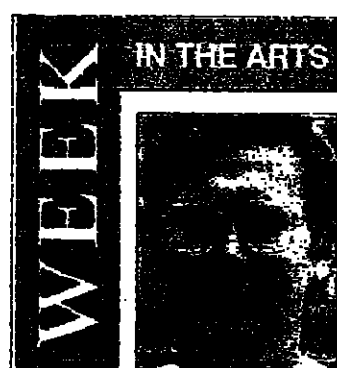
That is hardly surprising. I cannot remember a month to rival this one for bad news. First came the revelations of glorious fiasco at Covent Garden, compounded this week by Midland Bank's decision to end its excellent 26-year sponsorship of the "Proms" weeks at the Royal Opera House because "it thinks the place is too elitist".

After that came a succession of dire tales from the theatre world. Several pioneering London venues have had their grants cut. The Royal Shakespeare Company re-

vealed a £1.6 million deficit. The Chichester Festival Theatre announced a whacking £600,000 loss on the year. As for the other regional theatres, some have no bad figures to report because they have gone permanently dark.

'Twas ever this grim, you say, and I would agree with you. But the difference this year is that the arts world has been through the torture of hope. Now it finds itself locked in exactly the same prison cell as it inhabited before May. Only the guards have changed.

So panic has set in. Journalists are charged with "stirring up trouble", simply for reporting bad news. Sir Jeremy Isaacs, the former Covent Garden boss, says as much in the *New Statesman* today. "Commentators... and others dressed in a little brief authority, cavil, snipe and sneer," he sniffs. And the same message came



RICHARD MORRISON

from John Tusa, the Barbican Centre's boss, in an extraordinary speech on Wednesday. Here's a taste of his paranoia:

"For the press, even the respectable part of it, it is a question of

who is the next target in the arts? Last summer, a well known arts reporter said to me 'We have done for Covent Garden; it will be ENO next'. Arts reporting follows a general current of public mood that is at best indifferent to the performing arts and at worst actively hostile. It is difficult to see where the arts writers themselves stand on the issue of the arts crisis. Ladies and gentlemen, whose side are you on?"

This is magnificent rhetoric, but a bit skewed on the fact front. First, Tusa should recall that he is head of the Barbican precisely because allegedly "uncaring" journalists campaigned against his unsatisfactory predecessor, at a time when the cowed staff of the Barbican, LSO and RSC hadn't got the bottle to do so themselves. Since then, the Barbican has gone from strength to strength.

Secondly, he should recognise that for every "bad news" article about the arts, there are pages of glowing previews, flattering interviews and mouthwatering reviews. And thirdly, he should accept that arts reporters are not propaganda agents of the Arts Council. Are they supposed to turn a blind eye to failure, because they believe the arts to be "basically a good thing"? Don't be daft, sir.

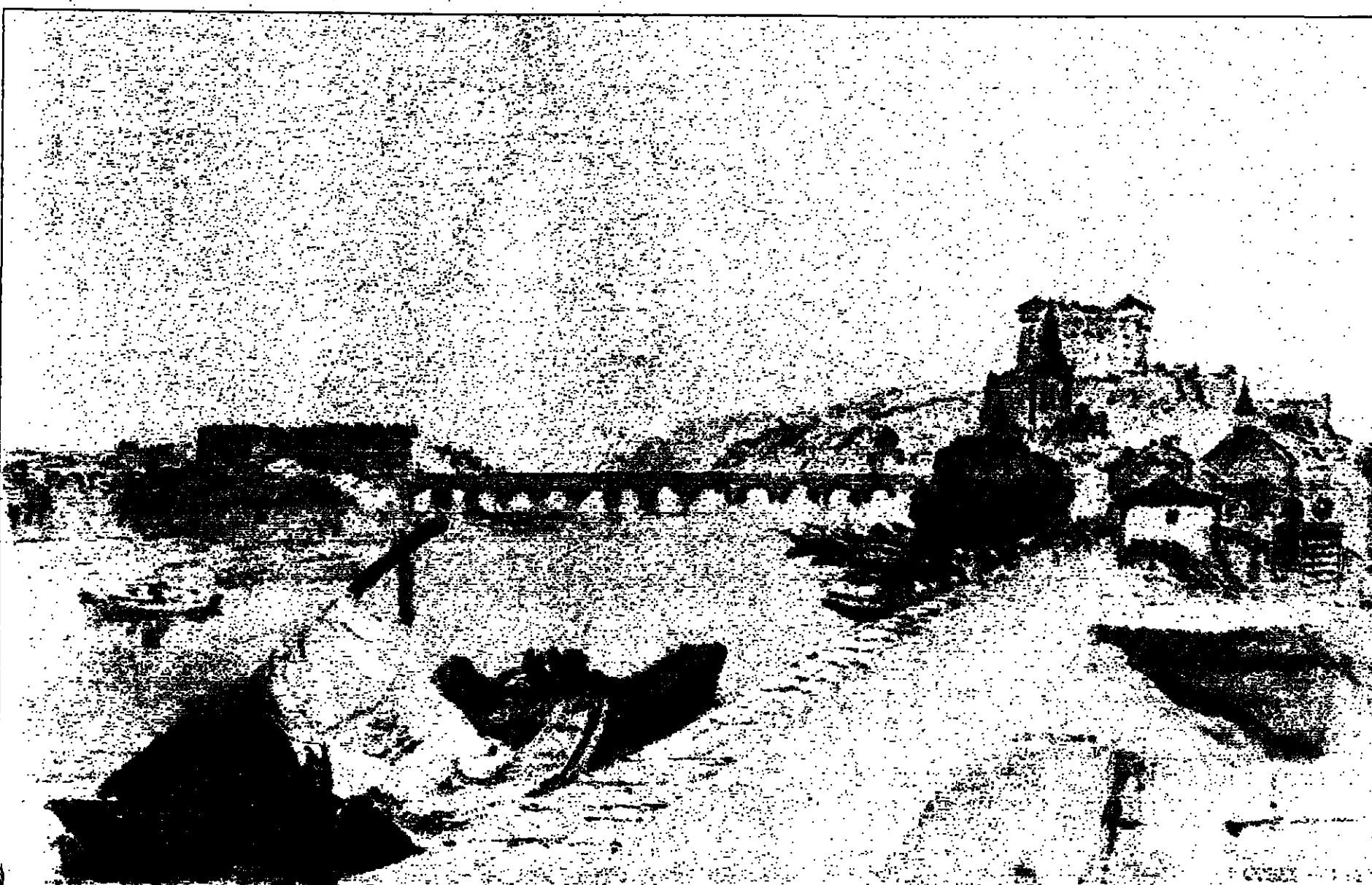
Let's get this straight: British arts organisations are floundering not because newspapers are hostile to them, but because almost everybody else is. Why do the arts have so few friends in the TV companies, who neither report nor cover anything vaguely "highbrow"? Why do so few local councillors vote money for the arts? Why are Cabinet ministers indifferent? Why are

business leaders scuttling out of sponsorship deals? Why are teachers not evangelising for the arts in their classrooms?

The answer is that, by and large, these hugely influential "opinion formers" have themselves not been initiated into the pleasures of the arts. Fighting the accusations of elitism is not simply a matter of reducing ticket prices. It is also about getting the right people on your side — people who can enthuse on your behalf. You don't do that by berating them for being ignorant philistines. You entice and persuade over many years.

Can the arts world start to do that, having neglected the task for so long? I don't know. But it must certainly try. Instead of moaning pathetically about this Government being "no better than the last", arts people should learn to find their own solutions. Otherwise the cell-door will slam shut for ever, the light will be switched off, and British high culture will be left to rot in a solitary confinement of its own devising.

GALLERIES: The fruits of Turner's steamer trip up the Loire in 1826 are on show at the Tate. Isabel Carlisle reports



Saumur from the West: the tranquillity of the scenes belies the tremendous haste with which Turner sketched in his fortnight on the river or while dashing between towns

River of pure light

When Turner made a trip up the Loire by river steamer in October 1826, he was well into his stride as an artist. He had already travelled to Italy and round England, his eye for the romantic and atmospheric was well sharpened, and he was in search of new territory. Post-Napoleonic France was beginning to attract tourists, and Turner was in the cultural vanguard. The town of Tours was already a popular centre for the English and Sir Walter Scott had set part of the action of his novel *Quentin Durward* (published three years before) there and in Liège, but very few travellers had been west of Mont St-Michel or explored the Loire below Angers.

As ever, Turner had a publishing venture in mind.

Of the 80-plus watercolour sketches of the Loire that he worked up from the pencil drawings in his notebooks, 21 went to the engravers to be made into plates for the first volume of *Turner's Annual Tour*. The book was a critical success when published in 1832, but only two more volumes in the series appeared, and Turner later gave the original watercolours to Ruskin.

These, as well as the vast majority of the sketches, have been reassembled for this exhibition. In addition there are the little pocket notebooks;

some finished oils that resulted directly from the Normandy-Brittany-Loire tour, and some of the initial proofs for the plates that Turner annotated or scratched with his thumbnail to introduce areas of light into sky or water. In particular there is one oil painting, *The Banks of the Loire*, loaned from Massachusetts, that has only now been identified as one of Turner's missing works.

For Turner, the Loire combined his ideal subjects of light, water and landscape, but in such a way that his body of work on the Loire is very

different from any of his other watercolours. The Loire is a shallow, sandy river that reflects the sky. Its glassy surfaces have a tranquillity that gives a contemplative, almost melancholy, mood to the paintings. There is not a hint of the tremendous haste with which Turner sketched while on the river, or dashed between towns in a diligence on the shore. With only two weeks devoted to the Loire, Turner had no more than half a day in most places, although at the beginning he spent two days in Nantes.

The quality of the water-

colours is further heightened by the use of blue paper which had been in production only since 1823. Its glossy appearance lent itself to the effect of mist rising from the river, as in *A Distant View of the Château de Clermont*, where fishermen are out on the still water in the early morning, or created a serene backdrop to architecture as in *Tours: the cathedral from the Place de l'Archeveche*.

To create drama out of uneventful placidity Turner frequently looked for striking architecture set against sunrises and seen from below. On

its terrace above the Loire, the Château of Amboise is viewed from water level, the rising sun obscured behind it. Alternatively Turner chose the parts of the river that have cliffs along their banks. In *The ruined piers at Champtoceaux* Turner is sailing close to the south bank, almost in the shadow of the mountainous sides. The former toll station, built in the 13th century, juts out into the river, but Turner was steaming by too fast to make out what it was. It remains an equivocal ruin that, along with the moored sailing barge, evokes a nostalgia for the past.

Turner on the Loire, the tour through Northern France in 1826 is at the Tate Gallery until February 15 (admission free). The exhibition and catalogue have been sponsored by Glaxo Wellcome

John Birt, come on down!

RADIO

There are only 32 annual awards ceremony days left before Christmas so I have been wondering whether to ignore them altogether or make an early move by announcing the radio awards. My mind was made up for me on Tuesday when I heard on Radio 5 Live a programme that demanded an awards ceremony all to itself.

This programme goes out at 9am and is called, eponymously, *Nicky Campbell*. The first hour of the programme is always a phone-in: a studio guest is grilled, or at least asked questions, by listeners.

The success of the show is in part dependent on the quality of the calls, but the studio guest can make or break the hour if he or she has something interesting to say. So I was particularly looking forward to Tuesday when the guest was a man who is reputed to be familiar with the broadcast media. His name is John Birt and he is Director General of the BBC, so I am the first to admit that he had an advantage when the judges met to decide *The Times* Radio Awards for 1997.

Remark: Most Likely to Provoke Envy in Listeners: Winner, John Birt on Radio 5 Live. "There are only a handful of [digital radio] sets in the country, and one of them is in my car, so I hear marvellous, digital, CD-quality sound."

Longest Gap Between Giving The Wrong Impression and Correcting That Impression: John Birt on Radio 5 Live, who told a listener that when he referred, two years ago, to "overbearing interviewers" he had not meant BBC interviewers. "I wasn't talking about the BBC, it was a long speech which plotted the way broadcasting, not just the BBC, had covered politics over a long period of time... I wasn't suggesting for a moment that that was a general characteristic of BBC interviewing."

The John Prescott Award for the Most Perplexing Answer to a Straight Question: John Birt on Radio 5 Live. Asked about the perceived absence of a contemporary music service for listeners who are too old for Radio 1 but too young for Radio 2, Birt said: "You have a very strong point, one we would like to do something about ourselves. Digital radio will take some of the con-

straints off the amount we can broadcast at the moment." Does this mean digital radios transmit different music, or is the BBC planning another music network?

Special Award for Resisting Temptation to Ridicule A Caller: John Birt on Radio 5 Live. "We've made great strides over the last ten years in reflecting a multicultural Britain and seeing members of ethnic minorities come forward in significant numbers." He had been asked why there were not more people from ethnic minorities in "classic serials such as *Pride and Prejudice*".

PETER BARNARD

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ALL SAINTS

All Saints (London £28.99 £13.99)
IT IS a simple fact of 1997 life that any new group of glamorous female singers will be compared to the Spice Girls. However, that is more a measure of the Spice Girls' overwhelming pre-eminence than it is a reflection on the music of All Saints, four young women from West London whose self-titled debut album boasts some of the most stylishly soulful pop you will hear this year.

The opening track, *Never Ever*, is enough to disabuse anyone of the idea that this is one of those pop albums where the froth rises to the top. A long, slow, gospel-influenced tune with a spoken intro — "All the answers to my questions I have to find..." — it is produced, as is much of the album, by Cameron McVey of Neneh Cherry fame. The reflective tone continues through to the dark, almost trip-hop shades of *Alone* and a credible version of the Red Hot Chili Peppers song *Under the Bridge*, which boasts some brilliantly cut-up guitar samples lifted from the original.

Other songs have been carefully tailored for the teen-pop/dance market, most obviously *Let's Get Started* and their recent hit, *I Know Where It's At*. But the slinky, sexy sound of *Bootie Call* and a cleverly updated arrangement of the LaBelle standard, *Lady Marmalade*, confirm All Saints as a group working more in the R&B tradition of TLC and En Vogue than in the pure pop world of the Spice Girls. Either way, on the strength of this album, All Saints are bound for somewhere near the top.

PAUL SIMON

Songs from The Capeman (Warner Bros 9362-46814 £13.99)

APART from Pete Townshend (*Tommy*) and Elton John (*The Lion King*), it is difficult to think of any pop star who has had the inclination or where-withal to write a Broadway musical. But Paul Simon has never been an artist to be put off by lack of precedent, and his first studio album in six years is a prelude to his musical *The Capeman*, written with the Caribbean poet and playwright Derek Walcott, which opens on Broadway in January.

In telling the true story of Salvador Agron, a young Puerto Rican thug who was imprisoned in 1959 for stabbing to death two innocent

NEW ALBUMS

teenagers on the streets of New York. *The Capeman* inevitably echoes the tale of gang warfare and romantic despair that informed *West Side Story*. But the musical vocabulary of *The Capeman* — a scrupulously observed combination of 1950s doo-wop vocal harmonies and warm, flowing Latin rhythms — could not be further removed from the brash showband arrangements of *West Side Story*, while the lyrics have a natural conversational tone that pushes the narrative forward with a minimum of fuss but, at times, tremendous force.

In immersing himself in someone else's tragic story instead of the minutiae of his own life, Simon has located a rich new seam in his work, making *Songs from The Capeman* a gain for popular music as much as the theatre.

PETER ANDRE

Time (Mushroom MUSH18 £13.49)

With its mixture of slow, super-manicured ballads such as *Letting You Go* and smoochy, mid-tempo pop-soul songs like *See You, All About Us*, *Time* finds Peter Andre being groomed with carefully-calculated precision to be the next George Michael, as if one wasn't enough.

Heavyweight collaborators including Coolio, Montell Jordan and the Fugees (who contribute to an insipid version of Smokey Robinson's *Tracks of My Tears*) have been drafted in to lend credibility, and the result is an album of high-gloss American soul which sounds more like the practised work of a committee of experts than it does the product of Andre's own creative instincts or artistic vision.



All Saints may be young, pretty and energetic, but any resemblance between them and the Spice Girls ends there. For a start, there are only four of them

THE REPLACEMENTS

All for Nothing/Nothing for All (Reprise 9362-46807; two discs £23.99)

RENOWNED for their swashbuckling lifestyle as much as for their raucous yet poetic brand of garage band rock'n'roll, the Replacements were the beautiful losers of American pop in the 1980s. Their nine-album, 11-year

career produced no hits, but *All for Nothing* (what a sad title) is a compilation which collects the best of many gems — *Left of the Dial*, *Kiss Me on the Bus*, *Alex Chilton*, *Skyway*, *I'll Be You* and many others — for which they were justifiably adored by both their fans and a disproportionate amount of industry tastemakers.

The second disc, *Nothing for All*, is a more uneven

collection of 17 previously unreleased tracks ranging from a sprightly live version of the Only Ones' *Another Girl*, *Another Planet* to a drunken, rehearsal-room slouch through Bob Dylan's *Like a Rolling Pin* (sic), a salutary recording which highlights the dangers of swallowing too much of your own mythology.

DAVID SINCLAIR

TOP TEN ALBUMS

- | | | | |
|----|------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | (1) | Spiceworld | Spice Girls (Virgin) |
| 2 | (2) | Urban Hymns | Verve (Fut) |
| 3 | (3) | Let's Talk About Love | Celine Dion (Epic) |
| 4 | (4) | Greatest Hits | Elton John (EMI) |
| 5 | (10) | Like You Do | Lightning Seeds (Epic) |
| 6 | (3) | Paint the Sky with Stars | Enya (WEA) |
| 7 | (6) | White on Blonde | Texas (Mercury) |
| 8 | (1) | Reload | Metallica (Vertigo) |
| 9 | (7) | Lennon Legend | John Lennon (Parlophone) |
| 10 | (11) | Backstreet's Back | Backstreet Boys (Jive) |

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Figure in brackets denotes last week's position

Caitlin Moran conducts the third ever interview with the Montrose Avenue. Save it — they are going to be huge

The beat where you live

It is a waxed hat with a fairly wide brim; not quite cowboy, but something that, nonetheless, looks as if it has been in sniffling distance of a ranch at some point. Heaven only knows why my friend chose to wear it to a Kenickie gig — the dress code for Kenickie gigs is generally a tiara and a sequinned sheath — but there it was, a big waxed cowhide among cheap Woolworth's crowns.

A curly-haired boy sporting 10in flares and Woodstock eyes hove into view. "Cool hat," he said, jump-starting the conversation. "The kind of thing David Crosby would wear."

"Possibly. Not at a Kenickie gig, but more generally, yeah."

my friend replied, happy to talk to a stranger after the magic words "David Crosby" had been mentioned. It turned out, after a pint, that the Woodstock boy was called Scott, and he had a band.

"What's your favourite chord?" my friend asked young Scott.

"Oh, E minor."

"And do you use harmonies?"

"Three part," Scott said proudly.

"Er, I'm a music journalist," my friend said, rather apologetically, "and I generally

trust any band that favours E minor and three-part harmonies. Do you want to send us a tape?"

At this point, any boy from an unknown band should blanch, do a double take, and then squeak excitedly: "Why, certainly! A music journalist! Cor blimey! I tell you what, I'll sing my songs for you right here! And do a sexy little dance!"

But Scott shook his head, much as John Lennon might have in 1967 if someone had said: "Tell you what, John — as a favour, I'll come down

and listen to some of your Sgt Pepper malarkey. But I'm not promising anything."

"They're not ready for anyone to listen to yet," he said. "Well, can I see you live?" my friend persisted. "Are you doing any dates soon?"

"Oh, you'll hear about us soon enough," Scott murmured. "We're the Montrose Avenue." And with that he disappeared into the audience.

Sure enough, four months later we showed our way into a heaving room greasy with sweat and nicotine, and watched the Montrose Avenue

show why Scott had been so confident. When a band have "it", that wizard alchemy that causes their music to spark and levitate, your body starts shivering while your mind is still trying to work out what guitars they use.

The band's influences are obvious — the Byrds; Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young; the Beach Boys; Rowf; the piano-playing dog from *The Muppet Show* — but delivered with such 22-year-old adrenalin verve that it doesn't seem like necrophilia, simply a continuation of groovy things past.

And it's so delightful watching them play that you find yourself giggling like a ticklish toddler. They still have that joyful, new-band penny fuzz that means each song is an adventure, each harmony thrills them as much as it thrills us, and being called back for encores sees them reduced to hysterical laughter.

Rob Lindsay-Clark, the main vocalist and nuclear tambourine player, looks like a cartoon Osmond after a week at Glasdonbury, teeth as large as tombstones set in a permanent grin. Scott's voice is a pure ache, scarred and bruised from life's stinkier moments, but still wildly beautiful. When, with third vocalist Paul Williams, they hit the harmonies on *She's Looking for Me*, one audience member becomes so delirious he strips to the waist and jumps on stage to dance ecstatically.

"He must have been at least 50," Scott marvels, three days later. He and Lindsay-Clark are sprawled across a sofa at a North London studio. As this is the Montrose Avenue's third ever interview, Lindsay-Clark becomes so self-conscious and embarrassed that, on occasion, he stuffs his head between two cushions and giggles helplessly while drumming his feet on the floor. Scott gives him a friendly slap.

"We seem to get a lot of people like that," he continues. "People who were around in the Sixties seem to have a lot of flashbacks when they see us."

We've only been going nine months, but the Sixties Survivors Grapevine seem to have contacted every member, and told them to get down to Montrose Avenue gigs."

So I don't suppose you recall meeting a man in a waxed hat at a Kenickie gig four months ago, I inquire, curious to see if the Montrose Avenue were rying the Menswear Road to Fame (buttonholing journalists at gigs and insisting they love Menswear).

Scott looks blank. "Er, was I there? No, I don't remember. I'll talk to anyone who looks like they love music."

She's Looking for Me is released on Monday by Sony. The Montrose Avenue play King Tut's in Glasgow tonight

NICK KELLY

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media times

'I really hate sacking people'

Bridget Rowe has a fearsome reputation as a tabloid editor. Interview by Carol Midgley

Bridget Rowe is poring over a light-hearted feature article involving foot-high photographs of male genitalia and wondering if there is any way she can acceptably publish it in the *Sunday Mirror*, the family newspaper she edits.

"It's brilliant. Isn't it?" she enthuses in her 22nd-floor office at London's Canary Wharf. "But could I get away with it? Considering how fortune has smiled on Rowe over the past few years, she, of all editors, probably could."

Not only did she secure the first pictures of Diana, Princess of Wales, kissing Dodi Fayed for the *Sunday Mirror*, but she also exposed Piers Merchant, the former Tory MP for Beckenham, as an adulterer and serial liar (he had consistently denied the affair with Anna Cox) and provided the pictures to prove it.

The Merchant story was a significant victory, and timely in the wake of pressures on tabloid newspapers. Rowe is also a member of the Press Complaints Commission's code of conduct committee and a fervent campaigner against a privacy Bill. "That story was right to do, it had to be done and the new code won't stop that sort of investigative journalism. It mustn't and it can't. That's why a privacy Bill could be extremely dangerous. People like Piers Merchant would be protected."

She and Merchant have never met or even spoken directly ("I would have enjoyed that") and, despite his threats, he has still made no complaint against her newspaper. This is despite the fact that the newspaper published pictures of him under a duvet with Cox even after he had resigned. It had promised to use them only if he continued to protest innocently.

"The operation was masterminded brilliantly by the newsdesk. Mr Merchant was such a conceited person; he had very little regard for anybody but himself. He certainly had none for his constituents, the previous Prime Minister or the present TV leader, all of whom he lied to. He saw himself as 24-carat perfect."

Rowe, 46, is someone of quick intelligence who speaks with a certainty

that suggests she does not easily change her mind. When she was Editor of *The People*, she was often vilified for putting "freakish" stories on the front page that, it was said, pulled the paper downmarket. But she has no doubt that she was right.

Her philosophy is that in this age of multichannel television and 24-hour news, newspapers have to offer a different kind of entertainment if they are to survive. One of her favourite stories was a *People* splash detailing the crimes of Andrei Chikatilo, a cannibal who had murdered 52 people and was incarcerated in a Russian prison before his execution. The front page carried a picture of him staring manically through the bars.

"Everybody said I must be mad to go with that story. They said 'OK, we'll just say she wasn't well that weekend'. But I did it and you couldn't get a copy of the paper that day."

"Newspapers have to be entertaining and different. We can no longer just report the news. It is just whether some journalists find that fact palatable or not. The *Sunday* newspaper market is very tight. If people are not loading their trolleys at

Sainsbury's, they are taking their kids to a football match, standing in the pub all day, or watching very good television." Many journalists find this both unpalatable and depressing, complaining that popular newspapers are drifting away from serious issues towards a diet of showbiz gossip. It is perhaps because Rowe accepted three years ago that she is the only *Mirror* Group editor to have survived from the pre-Maxwell years.

Insiders tell you that she is tougher than concrete, with a reputation for using obscene language (four-letter words regularly being hurled across the newsroom) and dispensing with staff who do not back her — hence the nickname "Death Rowe". The departure of several high-profile journalists soon after she took over last February left many stunned.

Asked about sackings, Rowe answers: "I hate it. I really hate it and it doesn't get easier, it gets harder because you know the person is going to be shocked and it's going to make the staff feel insecure for



Bridget Rowe: "Newspapers have to be entertaining and different. We can no longer just report the news"

several months until things have calmed down. I know I have a terrible reputation. You have to have backing — and people can't live on their names — they have to deliver the stuff."

"Everybody who writes about me thinks they have come up with the line 'Death Rowe'. I mean, Ian Hislop [Editor of *Private Eye*] thinks he is so bloody funny, but it's been around for years."

Rowe, who is separated from her husband, with whom she has a son, 10, says that reading hurtful pieces about herself no longer wounds. "After you have read the first two pieces, which make your stomach turn over, you can read anything about yourself."

In the aftermath of Diana's death, she has no regrets about using the "kiss pictures". "It was the best thing that could have happened. After the crash, when those flowers and cards started arriving at Kensington Palace, so many said that people were glad she was

happy in the last few weeks of her life. If those pictures hadn't been run, what would everybody have thought if the future King's mother had been found dead in a car in a tunnel in Paris with Dodi Fayed and we hadn't realised there was a relationship? But no, we had seen these sensationally happy pictures of her. She knew they were being taken and that we knew that she knew."

Rowe's arrival at the *Sunday Mirror* this year (she was already its MD) came after a bloody stand-off with Amanda Platell, the then acting editor. Insiders say the women hated each other, especially after Platell penned an article railing against He-women "who do everything they can to hold other women down". Platell demanded that the *Mirror* Group chief executive David Montgomery remove "acting" from her title. He refused, she resigned and Rowe was installed.

Rowe believes being the only woman tabloid editor on Fleet Street has helped rather than hindered her. "I'm able to do things differently because I'm female. I am never part of the 'old boys' club'. It's important that you are not seen just as a woman, and also important that you don't try to be a man."

"But it wouldn't help me with the news editor or the chief executive if I got out the white hanky and sniffed."

Many believe she has designs on *The Mirror*, the daily staple of the *Sunday Mirror*, edited by Piers Morgan. Rowe, however, denies this. "I love it here and next year will be terrific for the *Sunday Mirror*. But if or when I move from this job, it will probably be to something very different."

"The mids [mid-market papers] I like a lot. Britain is becoming very mid. The broadsheets are coming down to meet the mids and the tabloids are coming up. We have to make sure that we don't all end up the same."

Going digital could cause discs to slip

Chris Ayres reports on radio's clash with records

If you could listen to a radio station that played only your taste in music — nothing but the Spice Girls, say, or Wagner — would you still buy CDs? That question is being asked by record-company executives who worry that digital technology will create hundreds of specialist music channels, causing havoc in the CD market.

Rob Dickins, chairman of Warner Music UK and the British Phonographic Industry, says that record companies are heading for serious clashes with broadcasters over the issue, which may result in court action.

Record companies are already in talks with broadcasters such as the BBC and BSkyB, but negotiations are fast reaching a stalemate. The music industry is demanding that companies which create channels devoted to individual genres of music pay higher copyright fees to offset the harm they do to CD sales. But broadcasters — already facing huge bills for the development of digital technology — vigorously oppose paying higher fees simply because the means of distribution has changed.

"I envisage tribunals because people expect something for nothing," says Mr Dickins, who refers to specialist music channels as "narrowcasters". "We are investors in intellectual property, and the industry ploughs back 14 per cent of its turnover into new acts, more than nearly any other UK industry. If someone wants to set up a station where all they play is REM, then it must cost them more than a broadcasting rights fee."

The BPI has already taken its case to the Government, and Mr Dickins has revealed that he has privately met both Chris Smith, the Secretary for Culture, Media and Sport, and Peter Mandelson, Minister without Portfolio. The BPI wants Britain to become the first country to ratify a treaty drawn up by the World Intellectual Property Organisation, which will extend copyright law to cover digital services. The treaty has to be ratified by 30 countries before it becomes effective.

The record industry realises that technology will fundamentally change the way music is distributed, and that record companies will become mainly intellectual property owners. The most important issues, therefore, are to stamp out music piracy, which drains more than £3 billion each year from companies' coffers, and to bring copyright law up to date.

The speed at which the distribution of music is changing was shown this week when AT&T, one of the largest telecommunications companies in the US, revealed that it was setting up a project with record labels to deliver music directly to customers using the Internet. Users would download songs and albums in the way they would load up a piece of software — a process the BPI calls "pointcasting". Virgin Group also said this week that it would set up an online CD shopping service early next year, although this will be based around mail order rather than downloading.

"Technology moves quickly, and legislation slowly," says Mr Dickins. "We want to be prepared so that if — when — people choose to consume the music in which we invest in a different way, we can cover ourselves for payment. The right to put music into someone's house must be controlled. It's our intellectual property they're dealing with."

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CHANGING TIMES

Copper's shoes get the boot

IF YOU watch *The Bill*, you know that it always ends with two pairs of feet in black copper's shoes walking across cobblestones in time to the theme tune. Now, after nine years, the new executive producer, Richard Handford, plans to scrap the sequence in the new year, pointing out: "How often do you walk across cobblestones in Inner London?"

So the theme tune has been rerecorded, at a faster tempo, and the feet will disappear. Instead there will be a trailer for the next episode.

But what will the Met make of *The Bill*'s first scripts about police corruption, starting in January? Detective Sergeant Beech will be seen taking backhanders and falsifying

evidence over months, while popular PC Stamp will crash his police car and kill a pedestrian, leading to a manslaughter trial.

By these devices and a dollop of soapification, ITV hopes to fight off the BBC's shows about real people — *Changing Rooms*, one of its most successful, is moving from BBC2 to BBC1 and will be pitted against *The Bill*. Mr Handford says: "The *Bill* is the last bastion of the single play. There will still be one-offs, but there will also be stories running over four or five episodes."

CAN ONE be a little bit commercial? The BBC is having coy Auntie-style feelings over its newly launched UKTV cable and satellite



channels, UK Gold, Style, Horizon and Arena. These are funded by advertising sold by its commercial partner, Flextech. But the BBC is checking that nothing too demeaning is placed next to repeats of its precious programmes — direct response advertisements and commercials for sanitary protection have caused palpitations, says the advertising industry.

JOHN BIRT, BBC Director-General, loves talking about a new piece of kit, a one-man-operated "suitcase" packed with mini-cameras and gizmos that can replace outside broadcast lorries. The suitcase got its first trial last weekend, at a country music concert at Birmingham's International Convention Centre. The recording was apparently successful, and will be analysed by the BBC's Smart TV unit, dedicated to introducing cut-price

methods. How long before it is dispatched to the Proms?

MY ITEM about *The Daily Telegraph*'s own-goal subscription drive drew this response from Brian Ward, 75 years old and 40 years a reader. "When my £52 a year deal expired, I accepted an offer to renew at £120 for 48 weeks. Then I discovered a retired friend at the squash club, another regular *Telegraph* reader, had been offered 48 weeks for £72. Mr Ward asked for equal treatment but was turned down, so he stopped the habit of a lifetime."

THE latest audited sales figures for national newspapers show the *Daily Mirror* faded away last month. But Jim Chisholm, the newspaper marketing guru, points out that the huge rise in late-night shopping — 17 million people do it — pro-

vides an opportunity to lure readers. "Ever noticed how many morning newspapers sell out very early, while evening papers operate to ever earlier edition times? Is the answer a 24-hour newspaper, or better marketing?"

Meanwhile, despite attempts to woo a younger crowd, the average age of readers of all papers, bar *The Star*, remains over 40. The average has risen in the past ten years.

YOUR CHANCE to beat the experts. Michael Jackson, chief executive of Channel 4, set journalists a quiz at the launch of its Christmas schedule.

1. What was Channel 4's first certified hit?
 2. How many minutes into the future was *Max Headroom: The Movie* set?
 3. Who played the first character in *Brookside* to die?
 4. Which was the favourite Isaac? a) Michael Grade? b) Michael Grade?

None of the journalists present got more than one question right.

Answers: 1. The Snowman 2. 30 minutes 3. Danny Webb, playing *Carve*; he fell under a bus 4. a) Max Headroom b) The Interview with Dennis Potter

Coming soon to a giant dustbowl near you

THIS has been a tense month at the British Film Institute. The new chairman, the film-maker Alan Parker (*Midnight Express*, *Bugsy Malone*, *Fame*), and his deputy, Joan Bakewell, developed cold feet over its new £20 million Imax cinema for London's South Bank. This is due to rise by 1999 in the middle of the huge Waterloo roundabout, a horrible dustbowl. The cinema, showing special-effect films on a giant curved screen, is meant to be a massive tourist attraction, and rescue the nearby Museum of the Moving Image, run by the BFI. With work starting this month,

and £16 million of National Lottery money involved, there have been crisis meetings with the initially sceptical National Heritage Minister responsible for film and tourism, Tom Clarke. The BFI's acting secretary, Jane Clarke, says all has been resolved, happily, and that "the Imax will be a big success". But shouldn't the BFI be more concerned with education, and digitalising its catalogue? I recently tried to view a 1960s television show in its archive, which proved impossible — the programme had not been converted into a usable form.

Going digital could cause discs to slip

Chris Ayres reports on radio's clash with records

Spice put through the mill

The wave of hostile reporting that broke across all sections of the British media following the Spice Girls' dismissal of their manager, Simon Fuller, on November 5 took the girls themselves by surprise.

"We thought the media would support us. But people are just cynical and negative," says Estelle, 19, of the group's manager, David Laibin (Sporty Spice) says, speaking on the phone from Paris.

"We don't want to hang out our dirty washing in public, but because we haven't talked to the press about it, it's been reported as if we've got too big for our boots, as if we've belittled our own hype and we think we're better than the rest of the world," says Laibin.

That's rubbish. The simple fact is we couldn't have carried on in the situation we were in. And, sadly, we had to move on. It was quite a frightening decision, to be honest."



Crushed Spice: Geri Halliwell arriving at a party in August. Now the media talks of "ailing" album sales

Girls have, until the last two weeks, enjoyed a more mutually beneficial relationship with the tabloid press than any other act in the history of pop.

Insiders credit Mr Tyrrell as being the man who, until now, has wielded the carrots and sticks that kept the media on board, and that it was his sudden departure from the scene that allowed the situation to fly so spectacularly out of control.

Mr Tyrell, whose lips are even more firmly sealed than when he was representing the Spice Girls, is aghest at how inaccurate most of the reporting has been, with the broadsheets paying little more attention to detail than the tabloids. "Most of it is pure conjecture," he says.

Even by the dubious standards of pop music reporting, the "fall" of the Spice Girls is one of those episodes in

which the facts have not been allowed to intrude on a good story. Their "ailing" new album, *Spiceworld*, is at number one in Britain for the second week, outselling its nearest rival by a ratio of two to one. In America, they now have two albums in the Top 20.

And if ever there was a case of the media generating and then reporting its own story, it was the Spanish show at which the Spice Girls were supposedly booed on stage. The delay caused by the scrum of photographers refusing to make way led to the booing from a small audience consisting entirely of invited media and industry freeloaders, not the group's fans, who accorded the girls their usual rapturous reception outside.

"What we saw last week was a bit of bloodletting," says Alan Edwards, hurriedly installed as the group's new

press officer. "It's not that the bubble has burst, there has just been a readjustment in their stock as media icons, which was bound to happen sooner or later."

Insiders at Virgin Records privately admit that the Spice Girls have been overzealously marketed — "they've been presented more as loose-cannon celebrities than a musical group" — and that this has contributed to a cheapening of their image. And in the pop industry, where commercial instincts are supposed to come swathed in bolshevik notions of street credibility and artistic integrity, the girls' cheerful willingness to endorse products from crisps to deodorant spray is viewed with deep suspicion.

But love them or loathe them, there is little sign of interest in the Spice Girls abating just yet.

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media times

The slow death of BBC radio news

Libby Purves on an old news hand who has blasted the BBC

Copies of the BBC staff magazine, *Ariel*, have been picked up with unusual enthusiasm by visitors to its premises this week. Normally regarded as a talking poodle of management, once a year it becomes *Ariel Impact*, in which staff are free to speak their minds.

Familiar enough issues are raised — the effect of the corporation's internal market on libraries, and the British management style, complete with an interview with the Director-General. But the most striking voice comes from a zone of the corporation where busy, stoical silence is the norm.

The veteran reporter Hugh Sykes, of *PM* and *The World at One*, has been in service for more than 20 years. He is a classic example of a "safe pair of hands" — not a specialist, not a star name, but the man the BBC can send anywhere, or summon hastily back to the studio to replace a missing presenter on any of the flagship news programmes. I had long lost touch, but had worked with him on the *Today* of the late 1970s. So there was something moving and eerie in finding him still in the department, writing devastatingly, and straight from the heart, of a "sabotaged service."

BBC Radio current affairs, he says, is "the main source of broadcast news for serious-minded people", but has been stripped of resources and

many of its best people by the new continuous news networks. "I wonder if our listeners realise quite what a struggle is going on behind the scenes, quite how undervalued by the BBC itself its cherished medium is? There are terrible tensions in our offices now. As reporters, we work almost entirely on our own... people who rely on Radio 4 for sober news every day should know that we are all flying on a wing and a prayer."

He talks of reporters struggling unsupported, of material getting on to the air unheard and unchecked, of long tranches of *The World at One* and *Today* consisting of crackly telephone interviews, of features mixed hastily on headphones so that the sound levels are all over the place. He bemoans the fact that, at 47, he is often the oldest person on the shift.

"I am surrounded by intelligence, energy and goodwill but by very little experience. It is like a coalface where most of the pit props have been removed. It can be only a matter of time before there is a terrible mistake."

If radio current affairs were a car, he says, it wouldn't be a case of someone tampering with the brakes, more like letting the tyres wear down and hoping you never have to brake sharply in the rain.

The essay is the more striking for the fact that it does not come from one of the usual suspects. This is no habitual



Before the tempest: now radio current affairs "have been stripped of resources and people"

BBC whinger but one of its strong, loyal weathered pillars of silent endeavour. Only the temptation, and the brief amnesty, of the staff edition of *Ariel* made him speak before relapsing into hard-working silence. "It has been hard, writing this. I have always kept these thoughts within these walls," says Mr Sykes. "I have resisted newspaper requests to air my anxieties in public."

Many of his friends, he says, have gone for the "fool's gold" of the new services, and he

wishes them luck. He stays put, grim and dogged, serving the flagship news sequences on Radio 4. For 15 years and more he just got on with the job: travelling, hefting tape machines, cutting and writing against the clock, ploughing through government reports and conducting a thousand miles of intelligent, insistent but unaggressive taped interviews. Only over the past five years has he relieved his feelings, by keeping a private file at home, marked "BBC slowly dying".

He admits that at first he was embarrassed by the melodrama of the title, but says: "Now, it is not melodramatic. It is true, and very sad."

Probably his opinion will be dismissed. The views of quiet, long-serving, unshowy people generally are, once organisations begin to think of themselves as crucibles of exciting youthful change. But if such steady pit props as Hugh Sykes ever give up on their beloved corporation, then we will wake up one day to find ourselves far poorer.

Petty squabble over a reporting triumph

A silly vendetta is being pursued between Paul Johnson in *The Spectator* and Alan Rusbridger, Editor of *The Guardian*. Johnson revived the quarrel again last week when he accused Rusbridger of distorting headlines against Neil Hamilton, the Tory MP whose downfall was brought about by *The Guardian*.

Johnson reported that his wife, Marigold, wondered why he had to keep going on about that "nice" Mr Rusbridger. "The answer is that I care about *The Guardian*, which used to be a decent, honest and honourable — albeit conspiratorial — paper and has now become little more than a collection of gossip columns (and soft porn), a sort of daily *Tyrannosaurus Rex* version of *Private Eye*, which targets 'enemies', runs vendettas and engages in ruthless character assassination."

Study *The Guardian* and Johnson's angry accusations are seen to be nonsense. Yet the paper has been equally silly by responding in its diary with snide cracks suggesting he is certifiable. Disdain is more powerful than abuse.

At stake are issues too profound to be swamped by a vendetta. For, by any classic definition of what makes newspapers important and why they matter — for starters as custodians of freedom and standards of probity in public life — *The Guardian* has had a good 1997. It is now recorded in *The Guardian Year 97* (Fourth Estate) and was celebrated on Wednesday in the Dillos Lecture at City University.

Over four years, two Editors, Rusbridger and Peter Preston, his predecessor, three main reporters — David Hencke, David Pallister and Owen Bowcott — with help from Roger Cook and *World in Action*, described how they brought about the downfall of four ministers (Tim Smith, Hamilton, Jonathan Aitken and — indirectly — David Willetts), saw four MPs called before the Commons Privileges Committee and prompted the establishment of the Nolan Commission on Standards in Public Life. *The Guardian* is not a rich newspaper. If it had lost, its bill would have been at least £15 million.

Another reporter, Duncan Campbell, exposed corruption at Stoke Newington police station and coded a string of victories for the Police Federation which had won 95 successive actions for defamation against newspapers and magazines. The bill for this action would have been another £750,000.

They did not bring down a president but their story is as exciting as *Watergate* and if we were as self-regarding as the Americans, it would be celebrated as a triumph of British journalism instead of being subjected, as Rusbridger writes, to a surprising trickle of "toxic denigration".

As the three reporters described their work — the use of video cameras, bribes and intimidation, the role of friends and informers, their dogged detective work and the lucky flukes — it was as if we were listening to a thriller.

It was Bowcott who found the bills that proved that Lofcia Aitken had not, as her husband had claimed, been in Paris with him. *The Guardian* suspected she had in fact stayed at a Soho hotel — but had been refused permission to check the records by the proprietor. When Bowcott arrived, it was second time lucky. The proprietor had gone, the hotel was bankrupt. But still he was refused permission to check the records. Only when he faxed the Swiss receivers' head office explaining what was at stake was he let in.

Only the day before the trial was due to start did he find the evidence he wanted. Hence he wanted a bill paid by American Express which proved Lofcia Aitken had been in Switzerland and not in Paris. He also needed confirmation that she had flown to Switzerland — but BA kept its records in London. Subpoenas to AmEx and BA subsequently proved payments of the hotel bill, hire of a car and a weekend flight to Switzerland.

It has been a bruising year for Rusbridger requiring nerve, courage and commitment. One change in the law that he now proposes is removing the burden of proof from the defendant to the plaintiff in defamation cases. He is also keen on the view that public figures should expect investigation and that newspapers be allowed to make "honest mistakes".

Under British law, Hamilton and Aitken were forced to sue, he argued, but it had been an adversarial fight to the death — in which one party would end with their lives destroyed — rather than an attempt to establish the truth. That was neither pleasant nor necessary. There had been appeals for sympathy for Aitken and Hamilton, yet both had set out to destroy the reporters' careers and had lied to protect their own careers. Now was the time to allow a moment's glory to the British press. It is.

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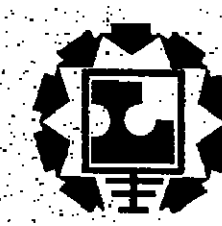
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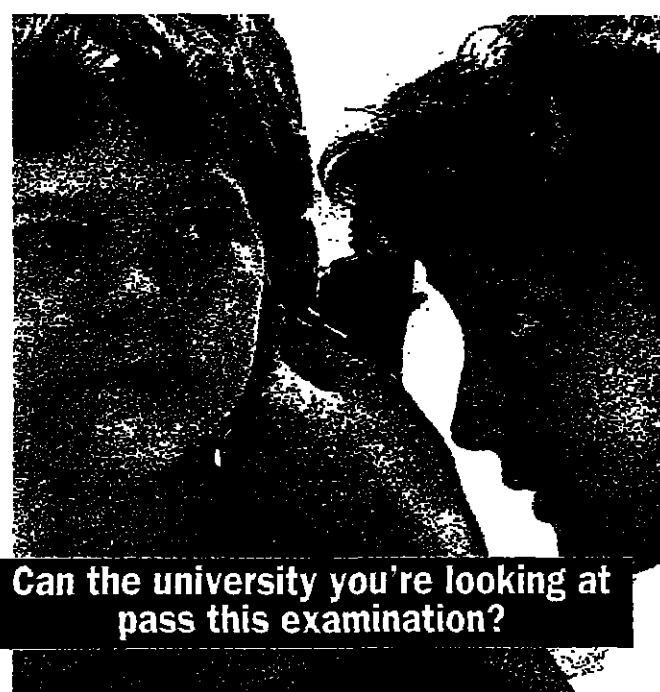
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The Professional Association of Teachers, an independent trade union with 40,000 members, seeks to appoint a General Secretary as soon as possible.

Based at the Association's Derby headquarters, the new General Secretary will be expected to work closely with PAT's Council and National Officers on policy matters, manage the Association and its staff on a daily basis, develop recruitment strategies, and maintain a high profile in dealing with Government ministers, civil servants and the media.

Salary will be linked to a JNC Chief Officer grade (currently £48,031) with car, private health insurance and contributory pension scheme. After adoption as the Council's preferred candidate, the successful applicant may have to stand for election against Association members. An election for the post is held every five years.

Further details from: Acting General Secretary, PAT, 2 St James' Court, Friar Gate, Derby, DE1 1BT. Tel: 01332 372337. Applications should be returned by 19 December. Interviews will be held on 29/30 January 1998.

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Official Fellow and Tutor in Law

The College proposes to elect, with effect from 1 October 1998, a Fellow and Tutor in Law. The appointment is tenable in conjunction with an Oxford University (CUF) Lectureship in Corporate Finance Law funded by the firm of Travers Smith Smith. Preference will be given to applicants who would be able to teach five of the following subjects: Administrative Law, Company Law, Constitutional Law, European Community Law, Jurisprudence. The salary is on an age-related scale of £20,167 at age 28 to £34,745 at age 45.

Further particulars are available from The Warden's Secretary, Merton College, Oxford OX1 4JD. Tel: (01865) 250229 (answerphone) or Fax: (01865) 276262. Applications should be received by 5 January 1998. E-mail applications cannot be accepted.

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the papua new guinea university of technology

Vice Chancellor, University of Vudal

The Interim Council of the University of Vudal invites applications for the position of Vice Chancellor.

Vudal University College received University status earlier this year. While the existing programme relates to agriculture it is intended to introduce other disciplines in the future. This will involve the institution in dramatic change relating to campus development and staff and student numbers.

The Vice Chancellor is both the administrative and academic head of the University and is responsible to the Interim Council for the control, management, good government and discipline of the University. The initial role of the Vice Chancellor will be planning the future academic and physical development and direction of the new University. Initially, the Vice Chancellor will need to liaise closely with the PNG University of Technology.

The successful applicant will have appropriate tertiary qualifications, experience in institutional development, possess outstanding qualities of leadership and have excellent communication skills. He or she will have demonstrated an ability to manage human, financial and physical resources and will be committed to contributing to and fulfilling the University's goals and objectives.

Further information may be obtained from the Registrar of the Papua New Guinea University of Technology, Tass Chiam.

Salary per annum: Vice Chancellor K72,438 - K21,910. (Level of appointment depends upon qualifications and experience)

Initial contract period is normally for four years but shorter periods can be negotiated. Other benefits include a gratuity of 30% in the first year, 35% in the second year and 40% in the third year (paid at 25% support for approved research, appointment and repatriation fares, settling-in and settling-out allowances, six weeks' paid leave per year; recreation leave fares for authorised dependants after 18 months of service; education fares and assistance towards school fees for two children; free housing. Salary protection plan and medical benefit schemes are available. Staff members are also permitted to earn from consultancy up to 50% of earnings annually. Salary is subject to CPI increases. Exchange rate stabilization on the international component of salary and on gratuity payment is payable.

Detailed applications (two copies) with curriculum vitae, including certified copies of qualifications obtained and names, addresses and telephone numbers of three referees and an indication of the earliest availability to take up the appointment should be received by: The Chairman of the Interim Council, PNG University of Technology, Private Mail Bag, LAE, Papua New Guinea (fax 075 475 7200) by 28 November 1997.

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EDUCATION

You have seen the league tables — now how do you find the right school for your child?

Buying a home is a matter of class

Being close to a good school is still many parents' priority, says Katherine Bergen

This week's league tables will have been read avidly by estate agents, as well as parents. According to the agents Knight Frank, good schools are of prime concern to 60 per cent of families moving in rural areas.

The demand, revealed by its survey earlier this year of country house offices around Britain, goes against the current trend for coeducational schools. The study showed that 58 per cent of families concerned about schools wanted single-sex education for their offspring while 42 per cent looked for coeducational prep and senior schools.

Lady Margaret's School in Parsons Green in Fulham in southwest London, where it is rumoured the Blairs will send their daughter, is a good example of how certain schools can play a vital role in the popularity and price of houses, both in London and the country. Parents looking for houses through the Parsons Green office of Savills often request homes as near as possible to the school.

Academic excellence is not the only criterion. The Knight Frank survey asked its London and regional offices which two prep and senior schools were the most sought after by potential buyers. Of 16 regional offices, only three mentioned the county's top academic school.

In London only one in three

offices mentioned the borough's top school. Knight Frank's Patrick Ramsey says: "Families choose schools for a variety of reasons — not only because they are the top of the academic league table."

The areas with the highest demand for single-sex schools, says Knight Frank, were Beaconsfield, Esher and Tunbridge Wells, which all have a good selection of single-sex prep and senior schools. In counties as diverse as Surrey and Warwickshire, Knight Frank believes that proximity to schools has a direct impact on house prices.

Few families want a school run of more than 20 minutes, a factor that has increased even more in recent years as fewer families choose to send their children to boarding school.

James Rowntree, who is the sales director of Berkeley Homes in Surrey, says: "On registering with us, a large number of purchasers stipulate that they want to be within the catchment area of a certain school."

At Berkeley Homes' Courtfield Place development in Cobham, Surrey, six of the 16 five-bedroom houses sold to Americans resident in Britain, who wanted to be a short drive — two miles or so — from the American Community School in Cobham.

The 1997 Savills Central London homebuyers report on the topic of schools says the sample showed that only a



Tunbridge Wells Girls' Grammar: the Kent town has sought-after single-sex schools

fifth of those surveyed considered proximity to schools to be essential, but a further 27 per cent thought that it was important or preferable. Most of those who felt most strongly about schools were drawn from the 25 to 44 age group and usually wanted to buy a house rather than a flat.

The report goes on to say that anecdotal evidence would suggest these figures should be much higher, but that only 45 per cent of those sampled

actually had children living with them.

private sellers who take out advertising in local newspapers make the most of being near schools in their sales details. "We find that home-owners will always mention being close to the American School in St John's Wood if they take out an advertisement," says a spokesman from the advertising section of the *Hampstead & Highgate Express*, a newspaper serving

parts of North London.

But Hugh Dunsmore-Hardy of the National Association of Estate Agents says that under the Property Misdescriptions Act, agents cannot make bold promises about parents getting children into certain schools.

He adds: "Estate agents can be prosecuted for misrepresenting local amenities or facilities, so they tend just to give general information about schools in the area."

For a good school is distance no object?

Hugh Thompson on pupils who have far to go — starting with an hour on the bus

Children in London and other big cities travel for up to three hours a day to attend the major day schools that dominate the league tables.

Yet many educationists believe that though the nearest school is not necessarily the best, travelling long distances is not only a waste of time but makes the student less able to do the extensive home assignments and take part in the varied extracurricular activities that are the hallmark of high-achieving day schools. And the further children live from their school, the less likely they are to be able to develop the friendships which are so much part of school life.

Alley's, along with the other independent schools in the Dulwich area of South London, runs a shared coach service from Putney in the west to Bromley in the east. Other children travel further by train. The parent running the coach service is Brian Morby. "It picks up the first lot at 7.15am to get to school before 8.30 and drops them back around 5pm," he says. "It's a bit much for an 11-year-old, but the bus itself is a social experience."

The real problem is the after-school activities, of which schools such as Alley's have many. I have had a boy and a girl at the school, and I have had to limit them to two evenings a week. Otherwise, by the time they get home there is a problem with homework. There are a few late coaches, but parents usually get together and do a car run. There were nearer selective schools, but I liked the atmosphere and attitude at Alley's and the fact that it is mixed. I thought it worth the extra travelling effort."

As it happens, Mr Morby has recently relocated to Bromley, a few minutes from his home. "I have come to realise the terrible waste of

by the parents: they realise that choosing a school such as BGS requires a commitment from them."

The average travelling time to Manchester Grammar School is more than an hour: many travel two hours each way from as far away as Blackpool and Sheffield. But Martin Stephens, the High Master, says: "The boys are far more resilient than many parents realise and enjoy the freedom of travelling and the social life."

However, Abingdon School, south of Oxford, excludes anyone living 23 miles from the school or a travelling time of more than 40 minutes. Felicity Rutland, the registrar, says: "We are oversubscribed and do have a boarding side for those who live too far away. The majority of our day boys come on our buses, all of which leave an hour and half after school has finished to allow the students to take part in our many activities."

"It is a long day and we expect our students to put a lot in. Experience has taught us that those who travel too far are affected both in how much they can do and how much they enjoy it. Long travelling times have been shown to affect academic performance and the ability to benefit from what the school has to offer."



How far to school? Journeys can affect pupil performance

What is the 'right' school?

Top establishments are not always suitable, says Hugh Thompson

All parents want the best for their children. But that does not mean that the schools that produce the best academic results are necessarily the right schools for their children.

The highest-achieving schools are competitive, usually large and rely heavily on the self-discipline and survival instincts of the pupils. But there is a large minority of children who need more intimate, less pressured, surroundings.

How can a parent know whether their child should be pushed or would in fact do better at a smaller, slower-track school? There are plenty of examples of children who fail miserably at larger schools but move on to straight A grades elsewhere.

Peter Jennings, the head of School Advisory Services with Gabbitts, says: "Parents know their children well, and they should be going round a school not just on open days but at school concerts and less organised occasions to get a feel for the school's real attitude. Is it formal or relaxed, caring or disciplined?"

Mr Jennings adds: "There is a problem with coaching children in order to pass exams into schools where they will always struggle. It is vital to talk seriously to the head or form teachers at their junior schools. They should be aware of real prospects and where they can be optimised. Parents think too much of what they want to see at the end, rather than what is the right environment for their child."

A major factor is the size of school. The laws of economics, as well as supply and demand, force the best schools to grow larger and larger. But smaller schools have more of a family atmosphere and need almost everyone to contribute. Lady Margaret's School in Fulham, southwest London, is

a comprehensive with results to shame many selective private schools. Colin Busby, the assistant head, says: "With fewer than 500 in the eight-year school, we have an intimate, flexible environment. For instance, in the sixth form there are girls who are pushing themselves too hard, so we say 'go away and sleep for two weeks'. If we said that to others we know they would never wake up. Our expectations are that everyone will do their homework and do well but we also realise that every girl is an individual. It isn't a case of sink or swim. We care."

Peter Milner, the Headmaster at Quenton Hall prep school in Harrow, says: "By the time our boys leave we know them and their parents very well. We know that for some of the most academic schools are too ambitious. That sporty schools are not for them and that they would do better in a smaller cozier atmosphere. I want the boy to be as happy and content at 18 as he is at 13 when he leaves us. Being bottom of the class for four years can really hurt someone's confidence and seriously damage their eventual career."

While most parents have some knowledge of a few local schools, a good head teacher knows many more. Stuart Thackrah of Holmwood House in Colchester reckons that in any given year for his 40 leavers there are as many as 30 schools he would be advising as best choice for the individual involved.

"I believe that all should go to the best academic school of which they are capable," he says. But then for some it is important that they go to a smaller school because they are not so aggressive. There are almost endless combinations and permutations but there is always the right school.

Dealing with dyslexia

Anne Lee explains how to find a place for the child with difficulties

Discovering your child is dyslexic can be devastating. It can also be a relief to find that there is an identifiable and, to an extent, treatable condition. Despite the successful case for negligence against Hillingdon Education Authority in West London, it is still common for children to reach senior school incorrectly classified as lazy, unco-operative and unco-ordinated.

It is easy enough for an educational psychologist to diagnose traditional dyslexia, but dyspraxia, dysphasia and other learning difficulties are also becoming clearer. And there are not enough educational psychologists.

Once the problem has been diagnosed, many parents will look for a specialist school. If children are unhappy in the mainstream, they are likely to need special support and teaching until they have learnt the strategies that are going to help them to cope.

Schools that specialise in dyslexia will know how exhausted children can become because the work is so much harder for them. Specialist schools will arrange the academic lessons in the mornings and will have ways to make those extra exposures to spelling fun — and different. They will automatically promote touch-typing, and the best will include many confidence-building exercises to try to restore some badly damaged self-esteem.

It is no mistake that these schools at both junior and secondary level are full. Moon Hall, on the North Downs in Surrey, was one of the first specialist prep schools for dyslexic children with a high IQ. Such schools aim to put the children back into the mainstream when they are ready.

Small groups, a highly trained staff and close partnerships with parents do not come cheap. However, if you can afford only one or two years in this type of environment, at an early stage it is probably the best investment

you can make for your child.

At a senior level, there are plenty of specialist schools that are popular, and though they do not appear at the top of the league tables, parents know they are achieving miracles. Shipplake College at Henley-on-Thames in Oxfordshire and Bredon School, near Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, are well known for innovative combinations of practical and academic studies.

Though many parents fight shy of GNVQs, for some pupils the practical, coursework nature of the syllabus is just what they need. A GNVQ combined with an A level or two can still lead to many higher education courses.

If your child is only moderately dyslexic, and capable of operating in the mainstream, what do you need to look for?

First, ask the head teacher how often inset training on dyslexia is arranged. All schools should be offering this to all staff. Secondly, ask whether or not all children are screened for dyslexic-type problems. Be wary of staff who say: "We know our pupils; we do not need to screen them through tests."

A good school will make sure that every member of staff who teaches a dyslexic pupil is aware of the nature of their problem. A proper specialist member of staff will be able to brief staff as difficulties arise. Many pupils can operate well with just one or two extra lessons a week, but those lessons are vital for their self-confidence and skill.

Schools geared to dealing with dyslexia will have different marking policies for these students and will make sure that extra time is available in both internal and external examinations. They will also be familiar with the procedures for arranging extra time for GCSE and A-level students.

● The author is an education and business adviser, and a former head.

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CHANGING TIMES

TENNIS

Fernandez fall turns form upside down

FROM ALIX RAMSAY IN NEW YORK

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BOWLING: Wasim Akram 23 2-5-65-4; Shahid Nazir 7-5-1-27-0; Ahsar Mehmood 10-1-3-17-1; Mushtaq Ahmed 23-6-71-5; Arshad Khan 6-2-18-0.

PAKISTAN: First Innings 381 (Inzamam-ul-Haq 92, Saad Anwar 65, Ijaz Ahmed 65, Mo'in Khan 58; Wajid 5-78).

Match: D R Shepherd (England) and Said Shah (Pakistan).

TESTS TO COME: Nov 29-Dec 3: Rawalpindi. Dec 6-10: Karachi.

Wasim clenches a fist in triumph after dismissing Bishop to secure victory for Pakistan

India fought back on the second day of the first Test at Mohali. Sri Lanka, resuming their first innings at 280 for four, were all out for 369. India reached 90 without loss

Scoreboards, page 44

Running around the baseline like a whipper, she ended up in the court-side seating as she chased and scrambled to get the ball back. As Sánchez Vicario greeted winners with clenched fists and a roar of victory, Seleš's game fell apart and the No 5 seed was gone 3-6, 6-4, 6-4. And in a tournament of petty, off-court rivalries, Sánchez Vicario next plays her former doubles partner but now sworn enemy, Jana Novotná, in the quarterfinals.

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RUGBY UNION

All Blacks bask in Old Trafford's aura of greatness

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

NEW ZEALAND'S rugby players walked the wet and windy corridors of Old Trafford yesterday, not merely as part of a familiarisation exercise before their meeting with England there tomorrow but as a team that aspires to the global heights achieved by the ground's regular tenants, Manchester United.

"Success with style is the key to the great international sporting brands," John Hart, the All Blacks coach, said. It is what he seeks for his players, that they should be recognised not just in the world of rugby but across the whole spectrum of sport. He sees Manchester United as one of the few teams that transcend their sport.

New Zealand's consistency gives them the necessary longevity to fuel Hart's vision that also requires the sport to have a far more genuine international status that it enjoys at the moment, regardless of claims that it is played in more than 100 countries. Hence Hart's championing of a global competition in which the best of the northern hemisphere plays the best of the south, at international level

and below, on a far more regular basis.

In New Zealand, Manchester United is the side we all relate to and admire," Hart said. "Even to change in their dressing-room and play on their ground is one of the special moments." The fact that his captain for the day, Justin Marshall, professes admiration for Wimbledon does nothing to dampen Hart's enthusiasm and he welcomed the opportunity yesterday to meet Alex Ferguson, the Manchester United manager.

"It's an awesome stadium," Christian Cullen, the All Blacks full back, said. "Soccer might not be that big in New Zealand but everyone has heard of Manchester United and all the guys are expecting a special thrill from running out at Old Trafford."

His colleagues will include Josh Kronfeld, who has recovered from a rib injury and is preferred in the starting line-up at open-side flanker to Andrew Blowers.

England, too, paid a visit to Old Trafford, though their aspirations are more modest. Lacking both the success and

the style of their opponents, they will take into the game the more rugged attributes expressed by Richard Cockerill. The Leicester hooker wins his fourth cap tomorrow — though his first as an original selection at home — and cannot wait for the moment.

"I'm an aggressive player," he said. "I like to take control of games, of scrums, and it's a big responsibility on the front five to get organised, to do what we want to do and not be intimidated." "I'm a bit disappointed not to be playing against Sean Fitzpatrick, but Norm Hewitt is a great player and I want to make sure he knows I'm there. We have a good eight and we want to take it to them. We are there to play to our strengths and not be polite to them. We respect them for what they can do but we have no doubt in our own ability and at that first scrum, I have no respect for them."

Cockerill, one of the two changes to the side that drew with Australia last Saturday, compares New Zealand's front row of Craig Dowd, Olo Brown and Hewitt with the Toulouse trio against whom he played twice for Leicester this season in the Heineken Cup: Christian Calmano, Patrick Souza and Franck Tournaire. "If we play to our full potential I think we will do very well," he said. "I won't say we will win but we will be in with a chance."

His confidence is typical of a young squad with its way to make, though the older heads in the team acknowledge with some gravity the progress made by New Zealand in the last two years. Four of the England XV tomorrow — Phil de Glanville, Kyran Bracken, Jason Leonard and Martin Johnson — played in the side that beat the All Blacks 15-9 at Twickenham in 1993, the last time they toured here, and the present touring team has made huge strides since then. Sean Fitzpatrick, their injured captain, said yesterday: "We only remember the matches we lose, not the ones we win." Motivation, it seems, will not be a problem.



Tony Stanger, the Scotland threequarter, prepares to take on Australia tomorrow

Wales go without Quinnell

By MARK SOUSTER

WALES have delayed naming their side to play New Zealand at Wembley until next Tuesday to allow players, among them David Young and Allan Bateman, more time to recover from injury. A squad of 26 was announced by Kevin Bowring, the coach, yesterday but it was the names of those excluded, such as Scott Quinnell and Iwan Evans, that created most interest.

Quinnell's rocky relationship with the Welsh Rugby Union appeared to take another turn for the worse after the Richmond player met Bowring earlier this week. Although Quinnell trained with the squad on Wednesday, a lack of fitness was cited as the reason why he was not considered for the game against the All Blacks, which is a 72,000 sell-out.

Bowring said he had had a "long and amicable chat" with

Quinnell about his fitness. "However we felt he was not quite ready." Asked if the player had agreed with that assessment, Bowring replied: "You will have to ask him."

Iwan Evans has admitted that he has not played enough competitive rugby recently to be fit enough to be considered for international rugby. "Iwan told me, however, that he has his appetite back and he hopes to be considered for the five nations," Bowring said.

Garth Llewellyn's international career has been interrupted by the leg injury sustained by Steve Moore, of Moseley, that will sideline him for at least a month. Llewellyn was dropped against Canada in the summer and missed the matches against Romania and Tonga.

Rob Howley, whose appearance as a substitute against Tonga galvanised Wales on Sunday, seems certain to start against New Zealand. Gwyn Jones has been named as captain of the squad that shows one newcomer, Chris Stephens, of Bridgend. "I have a decision on who will take on their goalkeeping duties against Scotland at Murrayfield tomorrow, after John Eales, the captain, who struggled against England last weekend, remains the favourite."

Rod Macqueen, the coach, watched Eales in practice yesterday, along with Joe Roff, who took over from Eales at Twickenham and hit the target with two out of three, and Stephen Larkham, who could not be considered for the job against England because of a thigh strain.

HOCKEY

Thompson prepares for testing reunion

By A CORRESPONDENT

WITH the women's premier league looking for saviours to stop Slough's runaway cancer to a fifth title in eight years, Jo Thompson, the Ipswich goalkeeper, may feel more than usually exposed in the home match against her former club tomorrow.

Still widely regarded as Britain's best, Thompson, a veteran of 125 outdoor and indoor matches for England and Great Britain, has now retired from the international arena, but her outstanding form this season has kept Ipswich in touch, three points behind the leaders.

A defeat for Ipswich would effectively put Slough out of reach. Not that there ought to be undue concern with less than half the fixtures completed, but the feeling is growing that it will take something extraordinary to stop an attack that averages more than six goals per game.

Slough's emphasis on attack does leave gaps, according to Vicki Sandall, the Ipswich midfielder player, who rates the Slough defence as "weak," adding "if we can score a couple of goals, we can defend a lead successfully."

As Ipswich have the best defensive record in the division, this confidence may not be entirely misplaced. Thompson, however, may be stretched to foil the league's joint top-scorers, the Great Britain strike force of Mandy Nicholls, of England, and Sue MacDonald, of Scotland, backed by a full line-up of their international colleagues.

Injuries beset Ipswich who are still without Lucy Youngs and Colleen Adcock. To add to their worries, the influential Sandie Lister faces a late fitness test along with Lorraine Castles.

Clifton, in third place, travel to Forthly to take on Hightown, one place below. Hightown are goalscoring problems and will need to cut off the supply to the visitors' ebullient Denise Marston-Smith, scorer of seven of her club's ten goals.

Doncaster, who are already struggling for survival in the premier league having gained just one point, travel to Olton, while Trojans, a point better off, entertain the inconsistent Sutton Coldfield.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Lloyd rolls on at helm for Britain

■ **TENNIS:** David Lloyd has agreed to carry on as Britain's Davis Cup captain for the next three years with one immediate target — to restore his team to the World Group in 1998. Lloyd, whose original contract was due to expire on February 28 next year, has signed a rolling one-year contract, open for three years. Britain, who are in Euro-Africa Zone group one, have won five of their past six since Lloyd took over. Their 1998 campaign will open with a home tie against either Ukraine or Denmark for a place in the world group qualifying round, at the Newcastle Arena from April 3-5.

High-class field

■ **EQUESTRIANISM:** Ludger Beesebaum, the European showjumping champion, heads the entry for the 26th Olympia International Show Jumping Championships from December 18-22. All the world's top tea, apart from Hugo Simon, of Austria, the No 1, will take part.

Stevens returns

■ **SHOOTING:** Kirk Stevens, 39, from Canada, is expected to return to the professional circuit after an absence of five years, having won the Americas qualifying event in Ontario.

Bell wings in

■ **RUGBY LEAGUE:** Mark Bell, 24, the Sydney St George wing yesterday signed for Wigan Warriors.

Peter Ball

Alex Ferguson, the Manchester United manager, and Graeme Fowler, the former England cricketer, were among the mourners at the funeral yesterday of Peter Ball, the northern football correspondent of *The Times*. Whiffled last week from *tennismania*. Family, friends and sporting and journalistic colleagues attended the service at St Mary's Church, Rawtenstall, Lancashire.

Richmond unmoved by exiles' request

By MARK SOUSTER

THE commercial realities of professional rugby were thrown into sharp focus yesterday when London Scottish agreed to forsake home advantage and switch their Tetley's Bitter Cup fourth-round tie against Bath on January 3 to the Recreation Ground. The former cup-holders have guaranteed the exiles an undisclosed sum in compensation.

The decision was taken reluctantly after a fall-out between the exiles and Richmond, who share the Athletic Ground. Both clubs were originally drawn at home, but as Richmond's tie with Doncaster was drawn first they had priority over dates under the gentleman's agreement that exists between the two.

Despite repeated requests from the exiles, Richmond have refused to play their tie on Sunday, January 4, rather than the previous day, claiming that it would disrupt their training schedule.

The exiles believe that it would be financially reckless to stage their tie on the Sunday, so soon after the Christmas and the new year, when their crowds are notoriously low. Richard Yerbury, the club's chief executive, said: "This is not something we wanted to do but something we have had to do. The members are upset and unimpressed with Richmond."

One player the exiles are unlikely to face is Richard Butland, who yesterday asked Bath for a transfer.

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 7.30 unless stated

Nationwide League

Second division

Fulham v Gillingham (7.45)

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION:

First division: Portsmouth v Tottenham

Hotspur (7.0)

FAI HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE:

Premier division: Bohemians v Sligo (7.45); Drogheda v Finn Harps (7.45); Shamrock v UCD (7.45)

BASKETBALL

Unit-Bell Trophy: Newcastle Eagles v Chester Jets (7.30); Birmingham Bulls v Thames Valley Tigers (8.0)

HOCKEY

BRITISH AEROSPACE NATIONAL SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIPS:

Under-18: East (at University of East Anglia, Norwich)

RUGBY UNION

Cheltenham & Gloucester Cup

Group A

Northampton v Gloucester (7.30)

Tour match

Edinburgh v ACT

(at Meggelland, 7.0)

Club matches

Boroughmuir v Kilsyth (7.0)

Edinburgh Acadia President's XV v

David Seale XV (7.30)

Kilmarnock v Arbroath (7.30)

Glasgow Southern v Peebles (7.0)

Leicester v

Loughborough Students (7.45)

Musselburgh v

Stewarts Melville FP (7.15)

Salford v Gals (7.0)

OTHER SPORT

BADMINTON: Scottish Open (at

Glasgow)

SNOOKER: Liverpool Victoria UK

Championship (at Preston)

Smith surfs to world record amid high seas

FROM EDWARD GORMAN, SAILING CORRESPONDENT, IN FREMANTLE

LAWRIE SMITH, of Great Britain, and his young crew on board *Silk Cut* have not had the opening to the Whitbread Round the World Race that they would have wanted, but they underlined again yesterday that in terms of pure boat speed and sheer drive and commitment, they are easily capable of matching the best in the fleet.

In another extraordinary episode of downwind speed sailing in big, following Southern Ocean seas, Smith broke the world record for the longest distance sailed by a monohull in 24 hours. Last July Chris Dickson, at the helm of *Toshiko*, set a new mark during the pre-Whitbread transatlantic qualifying race when his boat managed 434.4 miles.

Yesterday Smith added another 15 miles to that already large total and came within a whisker of reaching 450 miles, with a total of 449.26 miles at an average speed of 18.7 knots. Smith, who has 1,687 miles still to sail to reach the second-leg finish here, thus recaptured the record he first set at the helm of the *W60*, *Intrum Justitia*, in the last Whitbread, when he covered 428.7 miles.

Silk Cut's blistering pace enabled the British crew to reduce their deficit on the leg leader, *Swedish Match*, skippered by Gunnar Krantz, by 13 miles.

Much more important is the business of catching Paul Cayard's

EF Language, which is just one place ahead of Smith on the race course in fourth position for the leg. In 24 hours Smith cut Cayard's lead from 70 miles to 38 miles, taking advantage of Cayard's difficulties with torn spinnakers and two broken spinnaker poles.

The record-breaking run came in lengthening and building waves, giving *Silk Cut* the chance to surf at speed through the troughs without digging her bow in too much.

Steve Hayles, the navigator, reported: "There used to be a rule on the old clipper ships that the helmsman should not look behind. You can understand why when you look aft

from the main hatch. Each crest, as it approaches, towers above the helmsman before the boat rises and takes off towards the next trough.

He continued: "Looking forward things seem far more sensible," although we have had one or two waves that have been extremely steep.

"The trouble in these waves is that you risk nose-diving — that is, plunging into the wall of water in front of you. This slows the boat very quickly and makes a broad very probable and places enormous loads on the rig."

"The trick to this is to ease the right amount of spinnaker sheet just at the

right time to 'pop' the bow and get things back under control."

In the overall standings, getting ahead of Cayard could have a dramatic effect on Smith's position, moving him from sixth overall to third, and cutting his deficit on Cayard from 55 points to 29. An elated Hayles is well aware of what is at stake in the last few days as the boats power north-eastwards towards Western Australia.

"Breaking a world record is great but we haven't forgotten that we are here to race eight other boats and it is crucial to us that we keep gaining on *EF Language* in particular," he said. Signaling off, he added: "That's all for now from the whole of the purple army aboard the mighty shark."

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FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Miami 122, LA Clippers 113; New Jersey 108, Boston 100; Charlotte 106, Portland 92; Philadelphia 97, Washington 86; San Antonio 103, Golden State 97; Orlando 95, Cleveland 90 (OT); Seattle 107, Vancouver 87; Los Angeles 88, Minnesota 85; Detroit 84, Chicago 83; New York 82, Phoenix 81; Utah 80, San Diego 79; Houston 78, Memphis 77; Indiana 76, Cleveland 75; Milwaukee 74, New Orleans 73; Washington 72, Boston 71; Philadelphia 70, Charlotte 69; Orlando 68, Miami 67; Los Angeles 66, Seattle 65; Portland 64, New Jersey 63; Houston 62, San Antonio 61; Dallas 60, Phoenix 59; Minnesota 58, Chicago 57; Utah 56, San Diego 55; New York 54, Houston 53; Memphis 52, Cleveland 51; Indiana 50, Milwaukee 49; Washington 48, Boston 47; Philadelphia 46, Charlotte 45; Orlando 44, Miami 43; Los Angeles 42, Seattle 41; Portland 40, New Jersey 39; Houston 38, San Antonio 37; Dallas 36, Phoenix 35; Minnesota 34, Chicago 33; Utah 32, San Diego 31; New York 30, Houston 29; Memphis 28, Cleveland 27; Indiana 26, Milwaukee 25; Washington 24, Boston 23; Philadelphia 22, Charlotte 21; Orlando 20, Miami 19; Los Angeles 18, Seattle 17; Portland 16, New Jersey 15; Houston 14, San Antonio 13; Dallas 12, Phoenix 11; Minnesota 10, Chicago 9; Utah 8, San Diego 7; New York 6, Houston 5; Memphis 4, Cleveland 3; Indiana 2, Milwaukee 1; Washington 0, Boston 0; Philadelphia 0, Charlotte 0; Orlando 0, Miami 0; Los Angeles 0, Seattle 0; Portland 0, New Jersey 0; Houston 0, San Antonio 0; Dallas 0, Phoenix 0; Minnesota 0, Chicago 0; Utah 0, San Diego 0; New York 0, Houston 0; Memphis 0, Cleveland 0; Indiana 0, Milwaukee 0; Washington 0, Boston 0; Philadelphia 0, Charlotte 0; Orlando 0, Miami 0; Los Angeles 0, Seattle 0; Portland 0, New Jersey 0; Houston 0, San Antonio 0; Dallas 0, Phoenix 0; Minnesota 0, Chicago 0; Utah 0, San Diego 0; New York 0, Houston 0; Memphis 0, Cleveland 0; Indiana 0, Milwaukee 0; Washington 0, Boston 0; Philadelphia 0, Charlotte 0; Orlando 0, Miami 0; Los Angeles 0, Seattle 0; 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SPORT IN BRIEF

Lloyd rolls on at helm for Britain

IN TERMS: Lloyd Lloyd has agreed to continue as Britain's coach for the 1998 World Cup. The 41-year-old coach, who has been in charge since 1994, will lead the team to the World Cup in France. Lloyd has been in charge of the team since 1994, when he took over from Sir Clive Lloyd. He has led the team to three consecutive World Cup titles in 1994, 1996 and 1997. Lloyd has been in charge of the team since 1994, when he took over from Sir Clive Lloyd. He has led the team to three consecutive World Cup titles in 1994, 1996 and 1997.

High-class field

IN EQUESTRIANISM: The European eventing championship, which is the top eventing competition in the world, will be held in the Netherlands. The event will be held in the Netherlands, which is a country known for its equestrian sports. The event will be held in the Netherlands, which is a country known for its equestrian sports.

Stevens returns

IN SNOCCKER: Stephen Hendry has returned to the top of the world rankings. Hendry has been the world number one for a long time, and he has returned to the top of the world rankings. Hendry has been the world number one for a long time, and he has returned to the top of the world rankings.

Bell wings in

IN RUGBY LEAGUE: The British and Irish Lions have been selected for the tour of New Zealand. The Lions have been selected for the tour of New Zealand, which is a country known for its rugby league. The Lions have been selected for the tour of New Zealand, which is a country known for its rugby league.

Peter Ball

IN TENNIS: Peter Dinkovic has been selected for the Davis Cup. Dinkovic has been selected for the Davis Cup, which is a tennis competition. Dinkovic has been selected for the Davis Cup, which is a tennis competition.

high seas

IN FOOTBALL: The FA Cup final will be held at Wembley Stadium. The FA Cup final will be held at Wembley Stadium, which is a stadium known for its football matches. The FA Cup final will be held at Wembley Stadium, which is a stadium known for its football matches.

Dalglish despairs at cruelty of quarter-final draw

By Russell Kempson

LIVERPOOL and Newcastle United have treated the Coca-Cola Cup with respect this season, with Roy Evans and Kenny Dalglish, the respective managers, fielding full-strength sides in a genuine attempt to win the competition. Not for them the youthful, weakened selections offered by Manchester United, Arsenal and Chelsea.

When the draw for the quarter-finals was made on Wednesday night, it was thus perhaps a shade unfair that they should be paired. They could have drawn Reading, Middlesbrough or Ipswich Town — the remaining small fry — but fortune deserted them. They will meet at St James' Park on a date to be arranged early in the new year.

"It's a bit ironic," Dalglish said. "While some clubs in the competition have been giving their younger players some experience, ourselves and Liverpool are two of the clubs who have fielded their strongest teams. And now we get drawn against each other. It's amazing, really."

It means three games between the clubs in less than a month, the cup-debating pundit would say. Liverpool will travel to Tyneside on December 28, with the return at Anfield on January 20. The latter was rearranged from August 31 after its cancellation because of the

death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

"They'll certainly be tough matches but we'll all be looking forward to the challenge," Dalglish, the former Liverpool manager, said. "I might also bump into one or two familiar faces along the way. The most important thing is that they've got to come to our place in the cup, but we'll be taking nothing for granted."

Newcastle last faced Liverpool in the Coca-Cola Cup at Anfield two seasons ago, when a goal from Steve Watson, playing as an emergency

centre forward, saw them through to the fifth round.

Arsenal and Chelsea have progressed to the last eight despite the competition as no more than a run-out for many of the lesser-known members of their squads. Arsenal Wenger, the Arsenal manager, might now favour fielding a stronger side when they play away to West Ham United.

West Ham, who have reached the quarter-finals for the first time in seven years, have lost only to Newcastle at

DRAW

Newcastle United v Liverpool
West Ham United v Arsenal
Ipswich Town v Chelsea
Reading v Middlesbrough
To be played week of Jan 5



Paul Gascoigne's latest brush with Scottish referees has earned him a five-match suspension.

The Rangers and England midfielder was shown the red card by John Rowbottom during the match against Celtic at Celtic Park on Wednesday night. The referee acted after Gascoigne aimed a blow at Morten Wieghorst, the Celtic midfielder, pictured. Gascoigne will serve an automatic one-match ban tomorrow and the latest offence gave him another 12 points, taking his total to

Australia unhappy at lifting of bans

By Russell Kempson

AUSTRALIA'S build-up to their World Cup play-off against Iran on Saturday was further disrupted yesterday when Fifa, football's world governing body, cleared four Iran players to play in the first leg in Tehran. They had expected to be suspended after receiving their second cautions of the qualifying series in the 3-2 defeat by Japan in Malaysia last weekend.

"We all following the rules here or not?" Terry Venables, the Australia coach, said. "I can't even dream why they have done this. It is definitely an unfair issue. We are still in the same qualification process and if you get to the World Cup finals, then there is an amnesty on bookings. I understand that. But not now."

Fifa announced yesterday that yellow cards do not count at this late stage in the qualifying competition, with Iran and Australia vying for the last place in the finals in France next year. Khoosro Azizi, the Asian player of the year, is now able to play for Iran.

Australia, who have been based in nearby Dubai, have complained about the state of the pitch in Tehran and also upset their hosts by calling the trip a "logistical nightmare". David Hill, the chairman of Soccer Australia, said: "I'm quite happy to clarify any misunderstandings when we get there."

The Football Association has welcomed confirmation from Fifa that world rankings will be used alongside previous World Cup performances to decide the eight seeds for France 98.

Fifa had suggested that, as with previous World Cups, the top eight nations would be selected on their records at recent tournaments.

Despite England rising to sixth place in the latest official rankings, they would still not have been seeded automatically after failing to qualify for the 1994 World Cup finals in the United States. Fifa is now considering a rethink of the rules to establish the seeds, who are then kept apart in the initial group stages.

"Other studies will take into consideration, in one form or another, the team's performance in the rankings," a Fifa spokesman said.

"They may be combined in some way with the coefficient system."

Merthyr make the most of reprieve

Non-League Football By Walter Gamble

THAT Merthyr Tydfil stand on top of the Dr Martens League with sights set on regaining the place in the Vauxhall Conference they lost three seasons ago is a distinct triumph for Colin Addison, their well-travelled manager.

"We deserve to be there," he said. "We've shown a lot of consistency to be there, but there is a long way to go, and all those other football cliches we managers use. We've all worked very hard and we need to work twice as hard to stay there, but I'm very pleased for the players, the supporters and everyone connected with the club."

Such a happy prospect looked unlikely towards the end of last season. Addison's first in charge — despite a highlight of reaching the first round of the FA Cup — "We were in receivership, the players weren't paid for the last six weeks of the season and we didn't know whether the club would continue," he said.

Salvation came in the shape of Charles Stanley, who runs a firm of chartered accountants in Milton Keynes, but has ties with South Wales through other business interests. It was only in the middle of June that Merthyr's future was secured.

"It meant we couldn't sign a player, couldn't put down any grass seed, put any paint on the goals," Addison said. "We had an awful lot of catching up to do."

There is a solid bedrock to a team assembled by Addison and Roger Gibbins, his player-coach, with Gareth Abraham and David Barhouse, survivors from last season, and Shaun Chapple, a mid-field player signed from Swansea City, being backed by youngsters such as Ian Mitchell and Anthony Jenkins.

The emergence of young players gladdens any club's heart and when it is down the other end of the table it is all the sweeter. Shown the way by a superb goal by George Parris, Matt Brown, released by Leeds United and newly arrived on the South Coast, was also on the scoresheet to help St Leonards Stamford sweep to a 5-1 victory over Cambridge City on Wednesday night — breaking their duck at the seventeenth attempt. Leon Sheppardson, the Stamford chairman, said: "It's been very character-forming — or so my young players tell me, anyway."

Santrac proves unifying force in Yugoslavia

The clock in Slobodan Santrac's office stopped in 1991, the same year that the bloody collapse of Yugoslavia began. It has not started again since, but the manager of the national team is sanguine about his chaotic facilities. "I want time to stand still," he said. "You only get a generation of players like this once in a lifetime."

Santrac, in his day the highest goalscorer in the old Yugoslav league, is the instigator of one of the more unlikely success stories in world football: the resurrection of the rump of Yugoslavia as a global power in time for the World Cup finals in France next year. In qualifying through the play-offs last week with a 1-2 aggregate win over Hungary, Yugoslavia not only showed themselves to be worth their place, but potential winners.

Tom Walker on the international manager whose dream has survived the darkest days

"I hope we will show the world what it has missed," Santrac said, making little effort to hide his bitterness over the international sanctions that prevented the Serb-dominated Yugoslavia of the warmongering Slobodan Milosevic from competing internationally. His team, based on the successful Yugoslav youth side of the late 1980s, was banned from the European championship in 1992, their place being taken by Denmark, the eventual winners. Yugoslav football, classically inventive, fluent but marred by ill-discipline, then disappeared from the scene.

Sadly for the domestic game, the success of the national side has been nurtured on foreign soil. Ten of the XI that won the second match against Hungary 5-0 last week are based abroad. Santrac had to contend not only with a lack of competition, but with the problem of simply getting his players together. "During sanctions there was often no transport, so the players couldn't even fly here," he said. "We'd bring them by car from Budapest or Vienna. It was vital that the people could keep a relationship with their club. I brought scratch teams of Yugoslav all-stars from the domestic league and pit them against the national side. For the four years of sanctions, it kept team spirit alive."

The players paid from their own pockets to come back and they are respected for it," he said. Santrac is now assembling a B squad to increase competition for places. There is still room, he said, for some among the Yugoslavs playing in Britain to force their way back into contention — men such as Sasa Curcic, of Aston Villa, and Dejan Stefanovic, of Sheffield Wednesday. Further up the rankings is Vasa Savovic.

"As far as competition goes, playing abroad — and especially in Britain — is good," Santrac said. "But if they are too young then their development suffers. Curcic and Stefanovic have not progressed as they should. Physically, mentally and technically the Premiership is very demanding and maybe they weren't quite ready."



Santrac instigator

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

0171-782 7344

LEGAL NOTICES

No 6444 of 1997
IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985
CHANDLER DIVISION
COMPANIES COURT
IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985
AND IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the following company has been placed into liquidation by the Court on 11 November 1997.
COMPANY NAME: CHANDLER DIVISION
REGISTERED OFFICE: 11, 12 & 13, The Quadrant, London EC4A 3DF
LIQUIDATOR: Mr. J. J. Chandler
DATE OF LIQUIDATION: 11 November 1997
REASON FOR LIQUIDATION: The company has been placed into liquidation by the Court on 11 November 1997.

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONSTRUCT A ROAD
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the following application has been made to the Secretary of State for Transport for permission to construct a road.
APPLICANT: Mr. J. J. Chandler
ROAD NAME: The Quadrant
LOCATION: 11, 12 & 13, The Quadrant, London EC4A 3DF
DATE OF APPLICATION: 11 November 1997
REASON FOR APPLICATION: The applicant wishes to construct a road for the purpose of providing access to the premises situated at 11, 12 & 13, The Quadrant, London EC4A 3DF.

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SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By Robert Sheehan, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

The 1998 Daily Bridge Calendar has a hand for each day of the year, contributed by various well-known experts. Some of the hands are quite difficult but today's is suitable for a Refresher. It was submitted by Bobby Wolff, ex-Dallas ace and many times world champion. Try it after covering up the East and West cards:

Dealer South

Game All

Q 10 4
J 7 5
J 10 9 8 4
K 6

K 7 2
A 8 3
K Q 8 5
6 4 2

Q 10 4
J 7 5
J 10 9 8 4
K 6

K 7 2
A 8 3
K Q 8 5
6 4 2

KEENE on CHESS

By Raymond Keene, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

White: Alexei Shirov
Black: Michael Adams
Bundesliga 1997

Decision reversed

The European club championship match between Slough and Graz (Austria) aroused deep feelings when the arbiter, Bob Wade, defaulted a Graz player after an unacceptable intervention by the Austrian captain. Wade's decision permitted Slough to qualify narrowly, from a match in which they had appeared to be facing certain loss. This match, which was played earlier in the year, attracted media attention when representatives from both sides came to blows during the altercation.

Adams's advance

Michael Adams has enjoyed a tremendous run of success in recent months. His exploits include share of first prize in the British championship, the gold medal for chess at the Mind Sports Olympiad and an unbeaten record in the world-class Tilburg tournament. A sign of his increasing maturity is the following win against Alexei Shirov who, in the past, had often proved a particularly dangerous opponent for Adams. In this case, though, Shirov is demolished with the white pieces in a mere 27 moves.

Diagram of final position

White: Alexei Shirov
Black: Michael Adams
Bundesliga 1997

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

AMORCE
a. Lack of repentance
b. A cap
c. Feudal service obligation

CHOWCHILLA
a. A bird
b. Mexican hot bean curry
c. Squirrel's fur

ESPAÑOLE
a. Brown sauce
b. A Toledo sabre
c. A dance

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This position is from the game Speelman - Schawweker, Hastings 1972. Black is a queen for rook down, but has a very strong passed pawn on b2. What is the best way to exploit this?

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Great story, shame about the lack of detail

What a week it has been for anniversaries. First, Ken and Jill's ruby wedding celebration. Then, the Prince of Wales's 50th birthday. And now Prince Edward has made a special family video to mark his mother's 50 golden years of married life. The day her house burnt down initially looked a curious choice of subject, but the broad smile on her face when she got it back, all clean and shiny again, suggested her youngest son had got it right.

In television terms, Edward Windsor, the producer, got it about half right with Network First's *Prince of Wales: A Family Portrait*. I was on an expedition to the great fire happened, so the first I heard of it was when a television news anchor, looking at the camera, said: "Did you guys hear about your Windsor Castle? No, but we knew we were about to."

So, five years later, I was grateful for the chance to see what really happened. Whether the mix of fire service video and spectacular news footage that kicked off last night's film will have had the same impact on those who have seen it before, I do not know. Prince Edward clearly thought so — by the time the fire was out he had used up almost a third of his allotted time and created a logistics problem for himself in the process. But he had also established the sort of first-hand accounts you hear on 999, the captions moved meticulously from Mick Koz, Royal Berkshire Fire Service, to HRH Prince Andrew, the Duke of York. We were all in this together, the slightly over-the-top message. Especially given what was to follow.

For what Prince Edward undoubtedly does best is get his



relatives out on parade. So we had Prince Andrew talking about saving works of art and very long carpets; the Prince of Wales discussing architecture and indoor badminton; and the Duke of Edinburgh getting characteristically stuck in. "I just felt there was going to be a hell of a business trying to put it all back again."

He was quite right. There was going to be a hell of a business, a hell of an interesting business, but it was a business of which this particular film barely scratched the surface. Several quite interesting minutes about how you get 1.5 million gallons of water out of a soggy ancient monument suggested that the story might be told in attractive detail. But it was not — instead, handsome lip service was paid to the 4,000-strong army of volunteers who worked on the restoration, but of the individual

thrown away, with the "after" pictures (undeniably magnificent) shot from angles that appeared to have no bearing on the "before". Still, the Queen looked wonderfully happy with it all and at least we had been given a tantalising glimpse of the green oak ceiling in St George's Chapel and the sunning lantern lobby, made from laminated oak.

The Prince of Wales marvelled at the "sheer magnitude of the skills that still exist in this country". I was just sorry we hadn't seen a bit more of them in the film.

On BBC2 it was the problems caused by a talent more innate than acquired that kicked off *Scare Stories*, namely the ability of human beings to reproduce themselves. Over-population is one of the great scare stories of the modern age, but according to Simon Campbell-Jones's film, it is the story of Thomas Malthus was wrong 200 years and

so was Paul Ehrlich, whose book *Population Bomb* caused such a fuss when it was published in 1968. Both were caught out by our continuing ability to feed ourselves — at least so far.

Much of Campbell-Jones's film was familiar, even if world population wasn't your specialist subject, but it was well told by an engaging bunch of those for whom it was. Coercion, we learnt, never works in the long term. The best form of contraception is economic prosperity (ask any rich Roman Catholic family) coupled with female literacy. The film also helps a bit and perhaps deserved a bit more credit than it got last night. In addition, I wouldn't have minded a few more statistics, to back up (or even back up) the generally reassuring message.

In a perfect world Natural Born Healers (Channel 4) would have a

- BBC1**
- 6.00am Business Breakfast (37650)
 - 7.00am BBC Breakfast News (1) (56337)
 - 9.00am Can't Cook, Won't Cook (1) (5444402)
 - 9.25am Style Challenge (5463337)
 - 9.50am Kibitz (1) (5670709)
 - 10.30am Change That (3930311)
 - 10.55am The Really Useful Show (1) (7741841)
 - 11.35am Real Problems Children in Need special (781800)
 - 12.00pm News (1) (5131773)
 - 12.05pm Call My Bluff (4288813)
 - 12.35pm Give Us A Clue (2150570)
 - 1.00pm News (1) and weather (52524)
 - 1.30pm Regional News (54271082)
 - 1.40pm The Weather Show (56739247)
 - 1.45pm Neighbours (1) (42428315)
 - 2.05pm Quilley (1) (2844850)
 - 2.55pm Wogan's Best of Blankety Blank (1) (7861353)
 - 3.30pm Playdays (8002605) 3.50pm Dear Mr Barker (5714044) 4.05pm The All New Poppy Show (5240865) 4.10pm Casper (1919173)
 - 4.25pm Record Breakers (56739247) 5.00pm Newsnight (1) (5359229) 5.10pm Blue Peter (1) (5210225)
 - 5.35pm Neighbours (1) (1) (2039334)
 - 6.00pm Six O'Clock News (1) and weather (315)
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CRICKET 42

Mushtaq Ahmed spins West Indies to humiliating defeat

SPORT

SAILING 44

Smith speeds to world record in Southern Ocean

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 21 1997

New coach aims to revive Tottenham by instilling discipline and team spirit

Gross spurred on by sense of history

BY RUSSELL KEMPSON

A HEARSE waited outside the church of St Francis de Sales, opposite White Hart Lane, yesterday — a final, coincidental reminder, perhaps, that Gerry Francis was no longer the manager of Tottenham Hotspur. Inside White Hart Lane, Christian Gross, his successor, was installed. It was the first day of his rescue mission, to revive a club languishing in the depths of the FA Carling Premiership.

Gross arrived three minutes late, not the best example for one who is supposedly a stickler for punctuality. He had, though, travelled by London Underground from Heathrow and held aloft his ticket to prove it. "I want this to become my ticket to dreams," he said. "I came by Underground because I wanted to know the way the fans feel coming to Spurs. I want to show that I am one of them."

It was impressive, emotive

Coca-Cola Cup irony — 45
Angry Venables — 45
Yugoslavia's revival — 45

stuff from the former coach of Grasshopper Zurich. Gross, 43, becomes the head coach of Tottenham and his "dream ticket" includes Chris Hughton, the former Tottenham player, as his assistant and Fritz Schmid, a colleague at Grasshopper, as his fitness trainer. Alan Sugar, the Tottenham chairman, has given them 18 months to sort out the mess.

Gross is bald, multilingual and, for the moment, known as "Christian Who?" by most supporters, many of whom greeted his appointment with disbelief. He conducted the press conference and multitude of radio and television interviews with ease, emphasising important words by raising his voice in almost comical, sergeant-major fashion. In all probability, the Tottenham players will disobey at their peril.

"We have to stop, to stop, the fall of Tottenham," Gross said. "We must have spirit, good

spirit, inside and outside the club. Everyone has to work hard, teamwork is what I want — that is the key word. It is a big jump, a big jump, and a big challenge.

"The team has to act, not react, and we will be aggressive and play with great spirit. I was a team man when I was a player and even the biggest names have to fit into a pattern. With me, team spirit and discipline come first. You cannot have one without the other."

Gross was a midfielder player who began his career with SV Hogg and also played for Grasshopper, Lausanne, Neuchâtel Xamax, VfB Bochum, of Germany, St Gallen and Lugano. He made one appearance for Switzerland and played five times for the national B side. Since switching to management, he has led FC Wil from the Swiss fourth division to the second and guided Grasshopper to success in the league championship, twice, and the Swiss Cup.

Tottenham are one of the most famous clubs not only in England, but the whole world," Gross said. "I would like to aim for the kind of success that Bill Nicholson had with them when they did the double and were also the first English team to win a European trophy."

He likened Les Ferdinand, the England and Tottenham striker, to Harry Hotspur, the swashbuckling character from Henry IV and after whom the club took its name. "I want Les to be my Harry Hotspur," he said. "Hotspur was a warrior, so why not Les?"

Gross has been assured that money is available to strengthen his squad but he will first assess what he has inherited — a team that has won only one of its past ten Premiership matches and lies in sixteenth place. They next play against Crystal Palace at White Hart Lane on Monday night. "I am aware that Tottenham have already spent much money in the transfer market," he said. "I will not be asking to buy such names as Ronaldo."



Just the ticket: Gross, the Tottenham coach, showed his empathy with the supporters by travelling to White Hart Lane by Tube yesterday. Photograph: Anthony Upton

United capitalising on record profits

BY DAVID MADDOCK

PROFESSOR Sir Rowland Smith was in light-hearted mood yesterday, a somewhat surprising development given that he was presiding over Manchester United's annual general meeting. The United plc board chairman usually controls these normally fraught occasions with a particularly severe schoolmaster's approach, but this gathering was far from usual.

Sir Rowland even dared to suggest at one stage that if he were presented with a serious question, the board would retire to the bar. There was good reason for levity, as he explained to the 700 shareholders present. "We are the biggest and most profitable football club in the world," he said.

Yesterday was a good day for Manchester United. Not only had the world's richest club announced record profits

of £27.5 million, but it had also secured Andy Cole on an extended five-year contract, bringing the number of players in the first-team squad contracted beyond the turn of the century to 15.

Martin Edwards, the chief executive, also had some good news from Argentina. It appears that he has agreed a deal, in principle, to bring Marcello Salas, the Chile international playing with River Plate, to Manchester in the new year for a club-record fee of £11 million.

Edwards has no worries about financing the deal. His transfer fund stands at £12 million, with an extra £6 million in reserve. The club produced its record profit on a turnover of £88 million, sending its value on the stock market beyond £500 million.

Smith broke down the club's turnover into four main categories: gate receipts of £12.5 million, merchandising

at £28.6 million, television income of £12.5 million and sponsorship totalling £11 million. Even the catering at Old Trafford was worth £5 million. "Our success is all about winning," Smith said. "Every one remembers a winner and we have built a club that knows about winning."

The financial success has allowed Alex Ferguson, the manager, to gain a position with his squad that will be the envy of his club's rivals. While

the likes of Liverpool, Newcastle United and Arsenal all have players approaching the end of their contracts, Ferguson has all of his frontline men tied up throughout their best years.

"We are happy that Andy has signed a new deal," he said yesterday. "It is important that we get all our best players secured on long-term contracts and is another step forward."

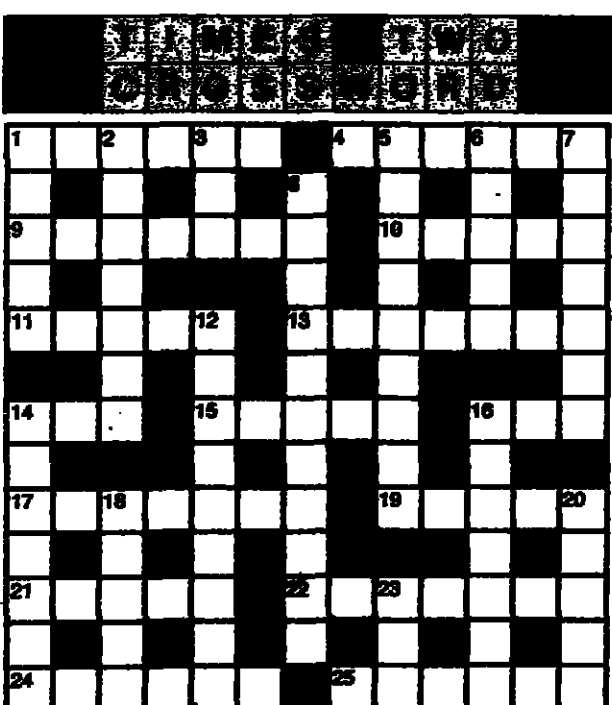
Cole may soon have, in Salas, yet another rival for his position, however, despite an impressive record of 11 goals in his past eight games, including hat-tricks against Feyenoord and Barnsley.

Ferguson endured what he described as "agony" when watching Salas at the weekend, but he seems to think it was worth it. "It was agony over there in Santiago," he said. "The media pestered me everywhere, even all through the game. I saw quotes I never said, but his record speaks for itself. I want to try to close the door on this."

Edwards may soon grant his wish. Salas, however, will not be allowed to leave until after presidential elections at the club take place on December 14. If the result is favourable, then United will have a new striker for Christmas.

THE 2000 CLUB

Player	Contract Expires
Diego Maradona	2004
David May	2003
Frankie Bony	2002
Frankie Bony	2002
David Beckham	2002
Ryan Giggs	2002
Andy Cole	2002
Paul Scholes	2002
Shay Burt	2002
Gary Neville	2002
Phil Neville	2002
Roy Keane	2002
Peter Schmeichel	2001
Teddy Sheringham	2001



No 1257

ACROSS

- 1 (Sham) front (6)
4 Important man (informal) (6)
9 Old pedlar: Keats looked into his Homer (7)
10 Musical form: dreamlike state (5)
11 Soothe: something soothing (5)
13 Living in water (7)
14 Spaniard: Russian river (3)
15 Francis — philosopher; Roger —, scientist/moon (5)
16 A herb: be sorry about (3)
17 Less hilly: blandish (7)
19 Monastic head (5)
21 Christmas hymn: last king of Romania (5)
22 Touching line: irrelevant course (7)
24 (Country) clothes of thick cloth (6)

DOWN

- 25 Contestant (6)
1 Concentrate (on): object (of attention) (5)
2 Charlie —, silent film comedian (7)
3 Water barrier (3)
5 Feverish viral disease (6)
6 A man (job); an Isle (5)
7 Macdonald massacre valley (7)
8 Imprison (11)
12 Hard-pressed by conflict, enemy (9)
14 Shortfall (7)
16 Violent theft (7)
18 Be in accord (5)
20 Personal teacher (5)
23 No score (3)

SOLUTION TO NO 1256

ACROSS: 1 Octopus 5 Sads 9 Tide 10 Routine
11 Inconsistent 12 Health 13 Howler 16 Impatience
19 Conduit 20 Epoch 21 Talk 22 Masonry
DOWN: 1 Oats 2 Titania 3 Preposterous 4 Stress
6 Unite 7 Sweater 8 Rub shoulders 12 Haircut 14 Let
down 15 Victim 17 Peral 18 Why

THE TIMES BOOKSHOP

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Player strike may hit four matches

BY SIMON WILDE

STRIKE action by Australia's cricketers next month is growing more likely. Their union has sent a written warning to the Australian Cricket Board (ACB) that it will order a boycott of four one-day international fixtures next month unless pay demands are met. The dispute is being monitored by cricketers' representatives around the world, who have held informal talks about establishing an international association.

The ACB has stated that it intends to fulfil the fixtures in the World Series Cup, in which two Australia sides, New Zealand and South Africa will compete, using non-union players — veterans and tyros from the Academy. The Australian Cricketers' Association (ACA) needs a two-thirds majority to institute a strike.

Some players are concerned at the ACA's additional demand for greater power. Ever the maverick, Dean Jones, the

former Derbyshire captain who plays for Victoria under Shane Warne, the ACA treasurer, has offered to captain a strike-breaking national side. Jones, 36, last played Test cricket five years ago.

The players last month rejected a 10 per cent rise. James Erskine, an Englishman and former IMG executive, who heads an aggressive ACA team of negotiators, claims there are "income opportunities" in the next five years worth \$129 million through pay-per-view television.

In England, the Professional Cricketers' Association (PCA) has held informal discussions, Matthew Fleming, its chairman, said yesterday. "We don't know where they might lead, but there must be mutual commercial and organisational benefits. But, at the moment, we the [PCA] are only looking at 'positive' ideas."

Shortage of quality bothers Beaumont

BY MARK SOUSTER

BILL BEAUMONT yesterday agreed with Clive Woodward that England would continue to lag behind New Zealand until more England-qualified players are exposed to the demands of Allied Dunbar Premiership first division rugby. He also called for a reduction in the number of games for senior players.

Beaumont, the former England captain, now chairman of the National Playing Committee at Twickenham, has identified "a lack of quality in the first division as the major problem in our game." In the aftermath of Emerging England's humbling by the All Blacks' second team on Tuesday, Woodward, the England coach, said there was a dearth of playing talent.

While accepting that the influx of European Union players could not be stopped, Beaumont suggested that financial incentives might be offered by the Rugby Football

Union (RFU) to clubs that field England-qualified teams. "We have got to sit down with the clubs and come up with an amicable and voluntary formula. The bottom line is we have got to get more English players playing in the first division," he said.

Beaumont denied rumours that he was contemplating resigning as chairman of the playing committee. Several members of the committee are suspicious of moves to co-opt Beaumont's ally, Fran Cotton, as a member. They feel this could stifle debate given Cotton's all-powerful role as vice-chairman (playing) on the RFU's management board.

Beaumont believes, as does Cotton, that the days of the committee system could be numbered. You cannot run a professional game by committee," he said.

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Wales delay, page 44

Tomorrow in THE TIMES

Simon Barnes on Capt Mark Phillips, the horseman

World Cup: Oliver Holt meets Terry Venables

Plus: Danny Baker

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